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AN APOLOGY FOR THE Church OF ENGLAND, In Point of Separation From it.

By the Reverend Father in God, William *Lord Bishop of St.* Davids.

Thomas

LONDON,

Printed for *William Leach*, at the Crown in *Cornhil*, near the Stocks Market, 1679.

P. Darcy

AN
APOLOGY
FOR THE
Church
OF
ENGLAND.
In Defence of
Separation.

TO THE

READER.

The design of this address is to recite the occasion of the writing, and of the publishing of this Tract. *Hic Rhodus, hic saltus.*

As for the rise of the Composure of it.

Having had a conference, and therein an amicable dispute with a profest Pastor of a separate Church (in the time of the Protectors Usurpation) he shortly after sent to me a large

letter fraught with arguments for vindicating his ſeparation from the Church of *England*.

I determined for ſome months to wave any reply to it, being not the enquiry of a diſciple or ſceptick, for ſatisfaction, but rather the challenge (in effect) of an adverſary, for victory, for triumph.

I perſiſted in the ſame reſolution, till I was advertiſed that my ſilence was interpreted conviction in judgment, and that the letter whilſt unanſwered, was concluded unanſwerable.

Though I could have tacitly brooked a contempt, a contumely, as to my ſelf; yet my duty prompted me to aſſert the cauſe, the honour of my Mother, the Church

Church of *England*, eſpecially in the diſtreſs, the umbrage of her perſecution, being no Perſian Votary to adore the riſing, to revile the ſetting Sun.

I have in this Apology entirely avoyded not only virulency of paſſion, but alſo acrimony of ſtyle, recollecting the grave, candid animadverſion of Mr. *Hooker*.

There will come a time when three words uttered with charity and meekneſs, will receive a more bleſſed reward, than three thouſand volumes written with diſdainfull ſharpneſs of witt.

As for the printing of this Tract, it had ſtill layd dormant in obſcurity, had I not been late-

ly informed, that the Original (conveigh'd out of my ſtudy above twenty years ſince without my knowledge) was imperfectly copyed, thereby diſadvantagiouſly diſperſt in many hands; and that if I would not recommend a true copy to the preſs, a falſe would be obtruded, without my correction, or approbation. I alleged my incapacity of compliance, being deſtitute not only of my firſt draught, but indeed of any other.

To remove this obſtruction, the ſame tranſcript which was deliver-ed to my Antagoniſt was retrieved and produced to me, which is now expoſed to the view of a cenſorious world, without any alteration.

One

One reaſon that (after much reluctancy) ſways me to a publication, is the charitable ſentiment of ſeveral judicious perſons, that this Apology may, by the divine bleſſing, conduce to reclaim ſome who have unwarily ſeparated from the Church of *England*, at leaſt to fix others, to prevent an unwarrantable receſs, which I primarily aim at within my own Epiſcopal charge, that thoſe precious ſouls I am accountable for be not like clouds whifled about with every guſt of wind; with every novel fancy, as if their compaſs for Religion had as many points to vary, as the Mariners for navigation.

I wish my dissenting Brethren would pensively consider, what advantages they exhibit to our Romish adversaries, who glory in the infamy of our divisions (though fomented by themselves in varieties of disguises) accounting our brands their ornaments, our rents their Union. As *Themistius* did recriminate, return the Pagan objection of Sects among the Primitive Christians to the Philosophers, divided, bandied against each other; so may I retort the same papal Argument against the Protestants; to the modern Romanists, whose jarring parties are not more linkt, cemented than ours, but their enmities, animosities more concealed smothered (as to vulgar notice.) How confidently do they spread their plumes,

plumes, whilst some Separatists no less unadvisedly than invalidly attempt to justify their separation from the Church of *England*, by the separation of the Church of *England* from that of Rome. *Par impar*.

In sum. They are not bottomed on the same solid important grounds.

They are not empower'd by the same, or equal legal Authority (the one withdrawn from a foreign, indirect, unlawfull usurpation, the other from a genuine, direct, lawfull jurisdiction.)

They have not been managed by the same sedate, prudent, regular methods and expedients (as I have assayed to demonstrate in this Tract)

The one hath an amiable aspect

by

by the unsullied colours and lineaments of a Reformation (the attractive beauty of truth, and holiness)

The other hath an uncomely feature, disfigured with the scars, the gashes of schism.

I acknowledge, I received a speedy rejoynder to my Apology, from my Antagonist, the answering whereof I deliberately declined for three reasons.

1. Because the rejoynder was not compleat, nor distinct to my Apology, as this was to his letter.

Onely, some passages reflected on, wherein the material exceptions were discust before.

2. The rejoynder started new debates

(like

(like *Hydra's* heads) with reiterated, ſharp invectives againſt enormities of practice in Eccleſiaſtical Courts; which probably ſifted, might prove unweighed aſperſions, no leſs readily credited, than reported. Accuſations are no evidences of Crimes. Barely to be impeacht makes no man a delinquent. However, I eſpouſed no ſuch quarrels. I neither was, nor am an Advocate for the defailances or corruptions of any members or profeſſors, but for the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the Church of *England*, which upon mature examination, my conſcience hath conſtantly dictated to me, to be the beſt conſtituted reformed Church in the world, moſt untainted, unbyaſſed, for

principles

principles of Piety and Loyalty (the pillars of Church and State) of exactest correspondence with Christs signal precept. *Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsars, and unto God the things which are Gods*, Matth. 22. 21. Of neareſt reſemblance to primitive purity, ſo reputed by diſintereſſed perſons, by eminently learned accompliſht foreiners, *Iſaak Caſaubon*, *Hugo Grotius*, and many others.

Whereas I ſcanned the arguments of my Antagoniſt, which himſelf framed to Syllogiſms, by the rules of Logick (the moſt proper teſt) having manifeſted their defects and blemiſhes in form and matter, having reduced them to ſeveral ſorts of Elenchs, of fallacyes, the better to unmask

mask ſuch ſpecious pretences. He hath offered no other defence for himſelf, nor confutation of me but only this conciſe Evaſion, that he will not meddle with my fallacies. Whereby I apprehended my ſelf diſengaged, as to further conteſt, which at this rate, would prove fruitleſs and endleſs.

ERRATA.

PAge 7. Line 11. read wines. p.ib. in the Margent r.infinitam, p.9.l.16 r.no. p.11.l.24.r.renew, p.25.r.Damus veniam, p.32. l.1. dele the p.32.l.16.r.imagination, p.63.l.21.r.initiation, p.73.in the margent r.*idem*, p.82.l.7.dele of, ib. l. 9.r.12, p.103.l.5. r.initiate, p.108.in the marg.r. refert, p.113.in the marg.r.Scult.p.119.l.18.r.offerers, p.120.l.18.r.Cherem, p.131.in the marg. r.ludatur, p.156.in the marg.r.notatam, p.157. l.10.dele or, p.167.l.24. r. concurrent, p.174. l.2.r. add is, ib. in the marg. r.Sodomam, p.179.l.ult.r.bursts, p.181.The account of *Causabon* touching *Hesychius*, misplaced in the marg. p.187. l.21. r.reins, p. 191.l. 10.r. paint, ib. l.19.r.solution, p.192.l.27.add a, p.193.in the marg.r.fit, p.201.l.13. r.add I, p. 203. l.16.r.moderator, p.209.l.23.r.*Nyssen*.p.215. l.10.add of, p.217.11.r.the, p.223.l.2. r.your, ib. l. 12. r. too, p. 224.l. 11.r.conjure, p.225.in the marg.r.nolint, p.227.l.13. dele that. ib,l.ult. r.earth, p.229.l.6.r.fit, p.ib.in the marg.dele Aug.

SIR,

SIr *Henry Wootton*, who had ſtudied Men and Books, verſed in numerous Cities and various Manners (like *Ulyſſes*) deſired to be celebrated to poſterity, only in being the Author of this ſage Obſervation, *The Itch of diſputing becomes the Scab of the Church*. This Scab is almoſt improved to a Leproſie: Differences not only ſtarted in points of Indifferency, Controverſies touching Circumſtances, Ceremonies, (ſhadows of Religion) but the Body, the Subſtance is unſinewed by diſputes, eſtabliſhed Doctrines being bandied Queries, the Principles of Belief being entertained for Problems of Debate: whereby both the Staves of *Zachary* are broken, and the Splinters of thoſe Staves have pierced to Wounds and Gaſhes, the Church being become like S. *Epiphanius* Bed of Snakes.

The ſad apprehenſions hereof inclined me to mourn for theſe Diviſions, rather than to ſtickle in them, for to cure Contention by Devotion, accounting my Prayers and my Tears my beſt Weapons, that I might contribute my aſſiſtance to quench, not foment the Flame. But recollecting that the Grecians enacted ſevere Sanctions against ἐυλοδρόπους, ſuch as rejected, quitted their Shields and Targets, though they tolerated ἐυλοχίφους, ſuch as abandoned their Swords and Spears. Pondering alſo that Apoſtolical Precept to be ready always to give an anſwer, an apology to every man that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you, with meekneſs, and fear, dreading leſt my ſilence ſhould confirm that errour I diſprove not, leſt it ſhould be interpreted conſent by man, and charged for guilt by God: having withal received an aſſurance, in our laſt diſcourſe, of a candid Reception, I vanquiſhed my own reſolution of waving any Reply, aſſaying a particular Anſwer to each part of your civil Letter, in point of Separation. Wherein I pray God grant us diſcerning ſolid Judgments,

Πρὸς ἀπολογίαν. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

ments, with humble, upright hearts, (a prudence tempered with innocence) that truth and peace may ſincerely be promoted.

The LETTER.

That reverend opinion and Chriſtian perſwaſion which I have of your Learning and Piety, together with your moderate and ſober Diſpoſition, which I lately perceived, towards thoſe that differ from you in ſome Circumſtantials of Religion, invites me to write to you.

The ANSWER.

Your undeſerved Character puts me to the mixture of a Bluſh and Anguiſh, who own nothing but Defects and Infirmities. As for Literature, I dare pretend no claim, but that of the Greek Orator, of Affection to it, not of the leaſt Perfection in it. As to Piety, my ſole intereſt is a deep ſenſe of my Impiety, a conſtant acknowledgment of a conſtant Guilt, with the Prophet *David*, *My ſin is ever before me.* That of *Tertullian* is my Motto: *Born*

Ἐὰν δὲ φιλομαθὴς εἶναι, οὐ πολυμαθὴς. Iſoc. ad Dem.

Pſal. 51. 3.

Non ulli rei nisi pœnitentiæ natus. Tertull. l. de Pœnit. c. ult.

to drive on no design, to expedite no task but repentance. As to a moderate temper, I hope I shall not frustrate your expectation: Religion needs not our Passion to bolster it. The Hearts of Christians may be cemented, when their Brains are not.

Non eadem sentire bonos de rebus iisdem
Incolumi licuit semper amicitia.

Gal. 6. 2. It is S. *Paul*'s Lecture, *Bear one anothers Burdens.* It is not ἀλλῶν, but ἀλλήλων. As the Tenets of others are irksome, disgusting to us (if different) so are ours to them; so that a mutual moderation (discarding rancour and animosity) is a debt reciprocally to be discharged and disburst. Even in substantial Differences, when I condemn any erroneous Opinion, I shall commiserate the person who asserts it, though it were not his Infirmity, but his Obstinacy. For even this state of spiritual desertion is most to be condoled.

As to you I shall not dip my Pen in Gall or Oil, to revile, or flatter; expect not a Satyrist, or a Parasite. As God's

God's Minister, I shall not dare not mince, nor shuffle in Religion, (as I hinted to you in my last Conference) but shall search the Wound of Separation with the tenderness, yet with the faithfulness of a spiritual Chirurgion.

The LETTER.

Wherein I have declared my present Light of which I am convinced, to be a truth, according to the Word of God, and therefore walk therein, yet I hope a heart ready to embrace further what God shall by any means from the Law and the Testimonies reveal.

The ANSWER.

This present Light is but a new Light, I pray beware left it prove the delusion of the old Serpent. The Spirit of Darkness can transform himself into an Angel of Light. Conviction may in this case tend to Condemnation. The Jews plead, that they are convinced, that their confident Tenets are evident truths by the Light of the Prophets; yet the dis-

mal fatal Veil is over their Hearts.

May the enlightning, ſanctifying Spirit cleanſe our Conſciences, clear and rectifie our Apprehenſions, our Opinions, that neither yours nor mine may be dimmed, depraved.

Conſcientia erronea ligat. Aqu. Whilſt you are thus convinced to walk by this Conduct, I blame you not. For an erroneous Conſcience is in a ſort obligatory: though Conſcience ought to be ſifted, that it be not erroneous; *Gentilis* the Heretick pretended Conſcience for his Blaſphemy againſt the Trinity.

Act. 23. 1. S. *Paul* vindicates himſelf, *I have in all good conſcience ſerved God until this day*, not only when he was a Pilot to ſteer the Church, but when he was a Pyrate to rifle it, when he was *Paul* the Apoſtle, and when he was *Saul* the Perſecutor, in all good conſcience, though for a time *errante*, with an erring, yet not *repugnante*, *vel dubitante*, with a claſhing or ſcrupling Conſcience.

Your profeſſion of a prompt, cordial ſubmiſſion to the Law and the Teſtimonies, is pious and commendable.

Though

Though Scripture be the pureſt, the exacteſt teſt for deciſion, yet not without ſome cautions. Satan like *Hannibal* can lay an ambuſh in the ſmootheſt Field.

The Apoſtle decyphers δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον, making the word of Truth a paſſport for Falſhood, and καπηλεύοντες, that deal with Scriptures as Hucksters do with Wares to corrupt, or as Vintners do with Wine to ſophiſticate them, that make earthly Merchandiſe of Heavenly Oracles.. 2 *Cor.* 4. 2. 2 *Cor.* 2. 17.

The Hereticks of all Ages have cited the Scriptures as Patrons of their Errours. *Videas eos Hæreticos volare per ſingula quæque ſanctæ legis Volumina---*

Nihil unquam de ſuo proferunt, quod non etiam Scripturæ verbis adumbrare conentur. Lege Pauli Samoſateni opuſcula, Priſcilliani, Eunomii, Joviniani reliquarumque peſtium, cernes infinita exemplorum congeriem prope nullam omitti paginam quæ non novi aut veteris teſtamenti ſententiis ſucata & colorata ſit. Vincent. Lyr. ad Hæreſ.

The Tempter, the Grand Patriarch of Hereticks in his conflict with our Redeemer, draws his Arrows out of this ſacred Quiver. *Mat.* 4. 6. *Luke* 4. 10.

He obtruded Scripture to our Saviour, but wreſted, curtled it. It is the Orthodox Maxim of *Tertullian*; *Truth is no leſs obſtructed by adulterating, depraving* *Non minus veritati obſtrepit adulter ſenſus quam corruptus ſtylus. Tertull. de Præſc. c.* 17.

praving the ſenſe, than corrupting, perverting the Letter. It is not the Shell, but the Kernel is the delicious word of life.

Some Expedients are requiſite for attaining the Kernel.

The Expedients are inward and outward.

The firſt inward Expedient is Interpretation, which is promoted by examining Tranſlations, conſulting with Originals.

The ſecond inward Expedient is Comparation by a ſurvey of the Context, to pick the ſenſe out of the coherence, or elſe by Analogy of Texts; for as one Taper kindles, ſo one portion of Scripture illuſtrates another.

There are alſo external Expedients, the outward helps of the Arts, eſpecially Logick (for apprehending the force and importance of the Proofs in Scripture) Rhetorick (for diſcovering the Flouriſhes, the Ornaments of its Tropes and Figures) of Witneſſes, wherein, though the Modern are not to be excluded, the Primitive are to be preferred.

The

The most ancient are of best repute, being least tainted and biassed.

Πιστότατοι πάλαιοι ἀδιάφθοροι γάρ. Arist. Rhet. l. 1.

Moses and *Bildad*, *Jeremiah* and *Solomon* recommend the Inquiry of Antiquities: it is Christ's prescription against Pharisaical, Heretical Novelties; *From the beginning it was not so.* Though the Fathers are not to be idolized with the Papal Gloss, yet are they not peremptorily to be contemned, or condemned in their opinions and expositions. Though the Romanists are *Veteratores*, saith *Joseph Scaliger*, corrupters of Antiquity, yet the Reformed are no rejecters of it, not *Novatores*, nor introducers of Novelties: unanimous Ecclesiastical Antiquity checques not with Purity. It is the Golden Rule of *Vincentius Lyrinensis*. That which is asserted in all Christian Churches in all Ages is truly Catholick and Venerable.

Deut. 4. 32. *Job* 8. 8. *Jer.* 16. 16: *Prov.* 22. 28. *Mat.* 19. 8.

Id teneamus quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est. Vincen. Lyr. advers. Hæres.

All these Expedients being united, are to be improved by a fervent penitent Devotion.

Scripture is not ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως, of private interpretation, that every one hath liberty to impose his own fancy, but there ought to be *sensus innatus* pursued

1 Pet. 1. 20.

pursued (as the Hugonot Champion *Chamier* distinguisheth) not *illatus*.

Though the Holy Ghost only can truly expound what himself dictates, yet to pretend his Comment on his own Text with a neglect of all subservient helps, were not a holy confidence, but a haughty arrogance.

Omnis Patres sic, sed ego non sic. Abul.

I presume your Modesty and Ingenuity will not permit you to split on this Rock, that you will not profess with *Abulardus*, to run counter with all the Fathers of the Church; nor with *Faustus (Infaustus) Socinus* explode the track of primitive Piety for Guidance.

Ego neminem agnosco patrem, neminem magistrum. Socin.

I have dilated this Point, because it is the *Lydius Lapis*, the Touch-stone of the Controversie.

Having premised these Cautions, I joyn issue with you in S. *Bernard*'s Close: *To the Gospel you have appealed, to the Gospel you shall go.* I may here review S. *Austin*'s challenge; *Produce one voice of Scripture in the behalf of* Donatus.

Ad Evangelium appellasti, ad Evangelium ibis. Bernard. Ede mihi unam Scripturæ vocem pro parte Donati. Aug. de pasc. c. 14.

The

The LETTER.

For the Searcher of all hearts can bear me witneſs, that it was not inconſiderately, or for any by-end, that I changed my former thoughts and practice.

The ANSWER.

I cannot be ſo uncharitable as to boggle at that you ratifie with ſo ſacred and ſolemn a ſeal. Though your changes have been the impreſſions of your heart, yet be pleaſed to conſider, there is no ſuch pernicious Sophiſter, as the heart of Man. It is deceitful above all things. A Supplanter according to the Original, deep beyond our fathoming, wily beyond our kenning. Your ſpiritual change ſtill ſuiting with your temporal advantages, your own retired thoughts may admit a ſevere reflection on your integrity, ſo far as to examine it, though I ſhall not blaſt, nor ſcruple it. The Enemy ſowed his Tares in the choiceſt Grain (the Wheat) like *Agrippina* that diſtilled her poiſon into *Claudius*'s delicacies. *Jerem. 17. 9.*

Satan

Satan may inſert, rivet an advantageous ſeparation into a pious intention (whereby the Serpent may inſenſibly ſwallow up the Dove) like *Julian*, who cauſed the Images of the Heathen Gods in the engraving to be intermingled with the Images of the Emperour, that ſo the Chriſtians, in affording a civil reverence to the one might exhibit an idolatrous to the other, though unwittingly.

Sozom. l. 5. p. 16.

Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtories are ample Records of Gracious Men ungraciouſly ſwayed by ſecular intereſts to deſert the beſt Tenets.

The moſt Orthodox Venerable Fathers under *Conſtantine* the Emperour were ſwayed by the potent violent ſtream of the Age under *Conſtantius*, to embrace the Arrian Confeſſion. This Torrent bore away the grave, devout *Oſius* (*centenario major*, ſaith the Hiſtorian) being above an hundred years old, as if more crazed and decrepit in Soul than Body, he renounced the ſacred Sanctions of the Nicene Council, which himſelf compiled and eſtabliſhed.

Sulpit. Sever. Hiſt. l. 4.

How rigid and diſmal a Doom did

Eteboliius

Ecebolius pronounce againſt himſelf, who having ſtill moulded his Religion to the ſeaſon, ſhifted Sail with every propitious Gale, at laſt he caſt himſelf proſtrate in the Church with this expreſſion of perplexity and horrour, *Trample on me as unſavory Salt.* *Socrat. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 4. c. 11.*

I relate it not virulently with the leaſt deſign of Application, but affectionately hint it for caution.

The LETTER.

As my Creed taught me, there is a Communion of Saints, ſo my deſire was to find ſuch a company; whereby I may comfortably partake of the things of God according to his revealed Will.

The ANSWER.

I am glad you own that renowned Chriſtian Badge of Piety and Antiquity, whereto this Age affords not publick recital, ſcarce private repute.

The Foundation you lay, will not ſupport the Fabrick you erect thereon. The Communion of Saints will not prove a Diviſion, a Fraction

Fraction of Separatists: 'tis ἀσύνθετον; 'tis ἀσυλλόγιστον, it unsoders the Church, untwists the Article. This allows not society with good Men in evil Actions, it debars not society with evil men in good Actions.

Ephes. 4. 5. S. *Paul* enforceth his Admonition of endeavouring the preservation of the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace by a Paraphrase of this Communion, *One God, one Faith, one Baptism.*

This Communion relates to the Head or Members.

Gal. 4. 5. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26. *Rom.* 5. 1. 18. *Col.* 1. 24. *Es.* 53. 4. 5. 1 *Pet.* 2. 21, 24. The Communion of the Head with the Members consists in our partaking of Christ's Merits by Adoption, by Justification, in his partaking of our indignities by Interpretation, of our iniquities by Imputation, Satisfaction.

That importunate appeal for judgment to persecutors, Rev. 6. 10. *doth infallibly infer a compassionate suit, as to their Fellow Members.* The Communion of the Saints deceased with the living, consists in their general prayers for us, in our general and particular praises for them. The former in the judgment of Reformed Divines consists with the excellency of their Charity: The latter suits with the practice of the Primitive Church. The Communion of the Saints living consists in affection by sympathy of joy

joy or grief, in edification, exercising our Graces to the benefit of others, in distribution of outward Talents. *Rom.* 12. 15. *Rom.* 15. 2. 1 *Thes.* 5. 11. *Acts* 2. 45. *Acts* 4. 35.

This bottom of Communion of Saints being thus unravelled, will not countenance or present the least thread of your separation.

If you aver a Communion with the Saints as Fellow Members, I desire to be resolved, who those Saints are? Not the reformed Protestants, not the Primitive Christians, you exclude both, their Church being not separate: if they be acknowledged Members of the Catholick Church, they are interested in the Communion of Saints expressed in the Creed. And then your separation from them amounts to a separation from the Church, and the Communion specified in the Creed. To ascend higher, are the Apostles the Saints you own a Communion with? Then prove they made such separations from Christian Congregations as you do. But you admit them not the Title of Saints (let me inoffensively ask for my own satisfaction) if they be real Saints, why not Titular? If your selves as real assume the Title, why may not the

the Apoſtles be indulged that privilege (in regard you plead to be Saints of the ſame extraction) eſpecially ſince as to the judgment of others at leaſt, there is greater certainty, infallibility of their ſainthip than of yours.

As for your deſire of company comfortably to partake the things of God, thoſe Aſſemblies you have quitted do afford thoſe ſacred Comforts you have deſerted them for; wherein ſacred Ordinances are moſt comfortably, becauſe moſt charitably celebrated. Being private Perſons or Paſtors of a Parochial Church, we are principled to be Converts, not Judges, to exerciſe ſeverity in repentance, not cenſure; to be inquiſitors in our own Breaſts, to condemn none but our ſelves. Religion is not tainted with Faction among us, nor Zeal ſtained with Schiſm. We bewail the practical prophaneneſs of any, that the ſame tincture of Grace is not viſible in Worſhip and in Life: however, our wickedneſs is not in *Gilgal*, as to this charge; God's pure Ordinances are not ſlurred, not vitiated, much leſs vacated (rendred ineffectual) by mens impure defailances, unleſs

leſs to themſelves only. *To the pure all things are pure.* 1 Tit. 15.

The LETTER.

Therefore do humbly offer theſe enſuing grounds to your ſerious conſideration, deſiring your judgement on them, and thoughts of them.

The ANSWER.

I take no felicity κωμωδίαν θεολογίαν, (in *Nazianzens* expreſſion) to mould Divinity into a Comedy. I ſhall not (by the Divine aſſiſtance) fail of a ſerious Diſcuſſion of your Adverriſements, weighing them in the ballance of Reaſon and Religion. I am not ſo improvident an Enemy to a numerous Family, as to be peeviſhly wedded to clouded Tenets, could I be rationally and conſcienciouſly divorced from them. I ſhould not ſtick to pen my own Retractations, according to the laudable Example of St. *Auſtin.*

The LETTER.

That there is a Church of God here on Earth all do agree in, concerning the Matter and Form in general there is no great difference; That it is coetus fidelium, *a company of people called out and segregated from the World by the Word; to walk together in the Gospel of Jesus,* is granted.

The ANSWER.

The *quod sit*, that there is a Church is uncontrolled, undiscussed; the *quid sit*, what that Church is, is the subject of Ancient and Modern Debates. Here the Logick Rule is to be observed, *Ambiguous words are first to be distinguish'd, then defined.* The Church is either Universal or Particular; Grand Differences being loudly prosecuted touching the Matter and Form of both.

The Romanists comprehend Miscreants, Reprobates for material parts and Members of the Catholick Church; the Reformed allow only Elect Persons

ſons to be true and real Members of this Church; yet they avouch vitious Chriſtans, nay ſcandalous (till excommunicated) to be Members of a particular viſible Church, but the Separatiſts do quite expunge, raze them out.

The Romaniſts exact, not as a conſecutive, but a conſtitutive eſſential Note (as a formal mark of every particular Church) Subjection to the Pope. The Separatiſts require a Church Covenant, an evidence, (if not aſſurance) of the grace of every Member. The Reformed Proteſtants different from both. But not to tread out of your track; Your Latin definition of the Church *(cœtus fidelium)* is accommodated to the inward Church inviſible. Though an Aſſembly, if particular be an object of Senſe, Believers properly are not: But your Engliſh illuſtration of it is the Character of the outward viſible Church (that walk in the profeſſion of the Goſpel of Jeſus) If they walk whether in the Notion of Nature or Scripture; if they profeſs, they muſt be viſible. This is to ſhuffle together *Diſparata.*

The LETTER.

ἐκκλησία, ἀπὸ τῦ ἐκκαλεῖν. *Saints by calling is Scripture Definition,* Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 2. *but how far these terms may be understood how far extended, and wherein restrained, is the controversie.*

The ANSWER.

Sancti titulus, non virtutis sed professionis. Erasm. in 1 Cor. 1.

I shall not except at the Etymologie, nor the Scripture definition, but the Restriction of it. That's the τὸ κρινόμενον the main hinge of the Question. If you understand Saints by calling, of an inward effectual vocation, the Testimony is an impertinency, as to our debate, touching an outward visible Church. If you understand it of an outward Vocation, remember our Saviours uncontrolled Maxime (*many are called, but few are chosen.*) This suites with a mixt Communion, with an outward profession; take *Aretius* his rational descant on St. *Pauls* Character; How are they called Saints, since it is certain many Novices in belief, yea, notorious lewd wretches in life

life were among them, whereto he frames a double answer. They were Saints by calling, because called to Sanctity, and endowed with preparatory Graces: Because the better part were Holy, the rest were Saints in the judgement of Charity, though not of Infallibility. It is the Candor, the Rhetorick of the Apostle, that the Title might be a Lecture, the name a charm to Holiness.

Matth. 20. 26. Quomodo sancti dicantur, cum certum sit apud eos multos rudes in fide, imo palam impios fuisse? Respon. Rectè dici Sanctos propter finem Vocationis ad Sanctitatem vocati sunt; h. e. ut tales sint, Aret. in 1 Rom. vers. 7.

Zanchy under the name of Saints apprehends titular professing Christians, but the faithful distinguish'd, severed from these by the Apostle to be sincere Believers.

Zanch. in Eph. 1. 2. the same distinction is expressed, Col. 1. 2.

Thus your first Citation is a Nominal definition of Christians, nominal professional, not real habitual, outwardly interested by Baptism, though not inwardly regenerated; Saints by destination, by designation, not in conversation, not in the least perfection (of parts, much less of degrees.).

Your second Citation (1 *Cor.* 14. 33.) is less advantageous to advance your design. God is not the Author of confusion (not of dissention in the vulgar Latin) not Ἀκαταστασίας of tumult, but

of peace, as in all the Churches of the Saints. That is in all Christian Churches that are called, obliged to be Saints.

If you observe your separation to be the source of dissention, of confusion, admitting no dependance, no subordination, it will appear at a great distance from those Apostolical Churches of the Saints; especially if you note the coherence in the *Claromonte* Edition (approved by *Beza* and other Reformed Divines) immediately adjoyning to the 33 *verse*, the 36, 37, 38, 39, 40*th. vers.* and annexing 34, 35 *vers.* to the 40*th.* What came the Word of God from you or to you only. *Theophylact* thus illustrates it, You are neither the prime nor the sole Believers. It behooves you to entertain that with affection, with submission, which hath the approbation of the Christian World. St. *Paul* conjures the *Corinthians* by the Examples of all Churches. The same Argument unsinews your separation, not to run counter with all Christian Churches. Produce one Christian undoubted Church of your separate strain not universally branded for Schismatical—

Phyl.

——*Phyllida ſolus habebis.*

The true Church ſhall be yours. You may derive your Pedigree from the Novatians and Donatiſts, who boulted ſome of your Tenets for Separation and Conſtitution. Theſe will diſcover ſome lineaments of your Complexion, not the intire proportion. However, if you are Saints upon their account, they were not Hereticks; and if they were Hereticks upon your account, your ſelves are not Saints. If you acknowledge them not Hereticks, you reject the Judgement of all Chriſtian Churches in all Ages, ſince their Hereſies were broached.

Syſinnius counſel to *Theodoſius* was prudent, to move Innovators to ſtand to the Judgement of the Church before Diviſion. I tender to you the determination of our Queſtion, by the ſuffrage and practice of the Reformed Churches before your ſeparation was raked out of the Embers it was enwrapped in, or elſe to the Primitive Churches, either before the flame of the Novatians and Donatiſts was

Socrat. in Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 10.

kindled, or after it was extinguiſh'd (by the vigorous Confutations of the Fathers, and the Pious Sanctions of Chriſtian Emperors and Councils.) If in deſpight of theſe you will perſiſt in contention, in ſeparation; my Refuge is the Apoſtles Apology: *We have no ſuch cuſtome, nor the Churches of God.*

1 Cor. 11. 16.

The LETTER.

Viſible Saints muſt be, but how far Saints muſt be diſcovered? The Word I ſuppoſe carries in it a holy ſeparation to God; a people ſeparated for his ſervice, for his glory; and how wicked men, having only a bare outward profeſſion may be ſuch, is unknown to me, whom the Scripture ſpeaks otherwiſe of, Tit. 1. Prov. 8. 9.

The ANSWER.

There is not an exact neceſſity of that Viſibility, ſo far as to conclude no Sanctity, if no Viſibility, no Church if no luſtre. There may be Gold in the Ore obſcured, not yet reſplendent, refined

refined Bullion. Where was the Visibility, when the Primitive Christians, during the brunt of Pagan persecution, betook themselves for security to remote Deserts, to obscure Caves; when Prisons were the sole Oratories and Temples, when the Churches were universally demolished; the Sacred Scriptures burnt, the Christians disrobed, disfranchised, stript of their Dignities, immunities, deprived of their liberties and lives by the fierce Edicts of *Diocletian*?

Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 8. c. 2.

Where was the Church visible, when it was o'erspread with a cloud of Arrianism (*Athanasius* against the whole World, and the whole World against *Athanasius*) *Eliah* discovered not one Saint but himself, yet God vindicated seven thousand, that had not bowed their knees to *Baal*. We are not visible Saints to you, nor you perhaps to us.

Ingemuit totus orbis & se Arrianum esse miratus est. Hier. adverf. Luc.

1 Kings 19. 18.

---Veniam damus petimusq; vicissim.

I pray God we may be all visible Saints to him.

I confess that to be a Saint imports a holy

holy ſeparation, a people ſeparated for the Divine Service and Glory. Thoſe you have abandoned, are ſo ſevered, dedicated by Baptiſm. They who demonſtrate only a bare outward profeſſion, may be Saints outwardly, formally for profeſſion, though not inwardly really as touching affection, touching ſincere Religion. Yet in this defect of entire genuine Purity, the good are not to be eſchewed for the evil, but the evil are to be tolerated for the good.

Non deſerendi boni propter malos ſed tolerandi mali propter bonos. Aug. Ep. 48.

I ſhall wave your firſt Quotation, *Tit.* 1. (no verſe being ſpecified) I ſhall not contend in a roving conjecture, in a dark conflict like the *Andabates*. I preſume you intended not the whole Chapter for a Proof, this were a fondneſs of ſeparation (σκλεύειν τῇ ὑποθέσει) like the vehement affection of the Platoniſts, whoſe intellectuals being preposſeſt with numbers, imagined number an Eſſential in every conſtitution.

Your ſecond Appeal is to *Prov.* 15. 8,9. *The ſacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the righteous is acceptable to him.*

The

The way of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, but he loveth him that followeth righteousness.

If you can dispense with Charity to brand those you separate from, to be wicked; If you can dispense with Humility to repute your selves righteous, yet this is no Argument for separation.

The Sacrifice of the wicked is abomination; therefore

The Sacrifice of the godly mingled with the wicked is abomination, you conclude more than you premise.

Judas eating the Paschal Lamb (as for his own personal action) was an abomination, but this had no reflection on his associates (in that oblation) the Apostles. Their Piety did not sanctifie and acquit him, nor did his iniquity defile and condemn them.

Nec alii obest aut prodest alterius religio, Tert. in l. adv. Scap.

The LETTER.

The manner, also of their coming into such a condition κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, *Saints called, not Saints compelled, or Saints making their Saintships their Calling;*

their

their Profeſſion, not enemies to Holineſs. This by the way.

The ANSWER.

Nec Religionis eſt cogere religionem quæ ſponte ſuſcipi debeat non vi. Tert. in l. adv. Scap.

It is true, Religion ought to be perſwaded, not conſtrained, Faith and Innocence are not the products of power and violence. Piety is not favoury if not voluntary. Yet tempers are to be diſtinguiſhed (mens diſpoſitions being as different as their complexions) Some are moulded like Wax for the impreſſions of the Sacred Spirit. Others are to be hewen like ſtones, to be ſquared and poliſhed Materials for the Temples of the holy Ghoſt. Of ſome take compaſſion, making a difference (or commiſerate thoſe that are ſtaggering according to a famous Manuſcript) others ſave with fear (*Beza* interprets it with terrour) pulling them out of the fire.

Jude 22. 23. Διακρινομένους, in the K. M. S.

Though compulſion is not allowable in the grafting, the planting of Religion, yet it is in the fencing and pruning of it. It cannot be compelled, *ſecundum actum imperatum*, for the inward apprehenſion; it may to outward

ward profession, *secundum actum elicitum*. I grant that Saints ought to make Saintship their Calling, or rather their Calling makes them Saints.

When their conversation contradicts their Vocation, their Profession, the crime is the greater; when our works confound our words, our lives check with our names. The title of a Saint is the impeachment of a Miscreant. *Reatus impiè nomen pii. Salvian.*

Your Proof (if logically examined) is fallacious. Wicked men are enemies to holiness, therefore not Saints, Members of a Church.

It is *ignoratio Elenchi*. In the same consideration they are not Saints and Enemies to Holiness. Their Saintship is in appearance, their enmity to Sanctity in substance. Holy at least as Professors, though unholy as Malefactors.

This by the way (as you express it) is indeed a by way out of the Orthodox road of the Jews and Christians. It is with new Tenets (saith St. *Epiphanius*) as with new ways, wherein when men are once engaged, they will proceed on with hazard of safe-

ty,

ty, rather than return with any fear of infamy.

The LETTER

I shall briefly speak something, concerning a separation from the Church of England, *in propounding these two Queries. First, whether or no the Church of* England *was as a Nation or National Church, constituted according to the Word of God, and Primitive Institution.*

The ANSWER.

Such unnecessary Queries have discarded necessary Duties, which are become pastimes and triumphs to our Romish Adversaries, Wounds and scandals to our Reformed Brethren.

I shall not cavil at the terms of the Question, though justly lyable to exception (as a Nation being a civil consideration, as a Church a spiritual) but I affirm the National Church of *England* to be constituted according to the Word of God, and Primitive Institution.

I ſhall not act the Samaritan, who would be reputed a Jew, when Judaiſm was reſplendent, flouriſhed; but in its Umbrage and Captivity had no portion, no intereſt in *Iſrael*. Having owned and reverenced the Church of *England* as a chaſte Matron, as a venerable Mother in her luſtre, I ſhall not deſert, nor brand her as an impure Harlot in her Eclipſe. I imagine her pathetically expoſtulating with you in this Aſſault, as *Coriolanus*'s Mother (in *Livy*) did with her hoſtile Son.

Joſeph. Antiq. l. 9. c. 15. l. 11. c. 8.

The LETTER.

If it was, whether it be not ſo degenerated and defaced from a true Goſpel Inſtitution, that a man cannot ſafely walk therein, and partake of the Holy Things of God without ſin?

The ANSWER.

Your twiſted Query is a Fallacy (*Fallacia plurium interrogationum*) a compound of variety, of contrariety (at leaſt in conſequence) of ingredients. A Church is not degenerated with-

without a charge of the corruption, the ſtain of depravation: A Church may be defaced by the freckles of affliction, by the ſcars of perſecutions.

The Beauty of the Piety of the Church of *England* is clouded, the Feature disfigur'd, by the Obſtructions of the times.

In this conſideration of ſolemnity,

Seges eſt ubi Troja fuit.

But an afflicted eclipſed is not a degenerated, depraved Church. If your ſelf be degenerated from her profeſſion, your queſtion reſembles the fond imaginations of *Harpaſte*, who being deprived of her ſight, would not be perſwaded, her ſelf was blind, but that the room was dark.

Duæ cæcitatis ſpecies concurrunt, ut qui non vident quæ ſunt, videre videantur quæ non ſunt. Tert. in Apol. ad Gent.

There may be in *Tertullians* Judgement, a confidence of two ſorts of blindneſs intellectual, to diſcern a depravation which is not, and not to ſee that perfection which is.

The Calamities of the Church of *England* are not to be imputed to her for crimes. Is ſhe leſs Chriſtian, becauſe

cauſe ſhe owns Chriſts Badge, and wears his Livery the Croſs. The participation of her holy things is not unholy. It is no ſin to communicate with her in theſe, but to ſeparate from her. To prevent an imaginary guilt of Pollution by others; beware leſt you incur a real guilt of Schiſm (by ſeparation) in your ſelf. It is the wily artifice of Satan, though probably you neither ken, nor dread it.

——*Sic notus Ulyſſes.* *Virgil.*

In this nicety of ſeverity you ſupererogate exceeding the Apoſtolical preſcription, *Have no fellowſhip with the fruitleſs works of darkneſs*, (The works not the workers) unleſs you intend to quit univerſally all ſociety with the World. *Epheſ.* 5. 11. *Ergo non prohibetur omnis conſuetudo cum impiis ſed omne commercium cum operibus eorum impiis & tenebroſis, Zanch. in Eph.* 5. 11.

The Sacred Charge (nay Charm) of a Sacred Life is caſt in the ſame mould. *Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt depart from evil.* From the quality the action not the agent, 2 *Tim.*2.19. *Signanter dixit, ab iniquitate non iniquis Epiſtius.*

the ſin not the ſinner; Unleſs as *Conſtantinus* reproved *Aceſius*, you will erect a ladder for your ſeparation to mount Heaven alone.

Socrat. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 7. Sozom. l. 1. c. 22.

The LETTER.

Touching the firſt Query, I have this to ſay: Firſt, Primitive Inſtitution the firſt Apoſtolical Church, Acts 2. 42. *from the verſes before I gather the matter of it, to be Converts, and no ordinary Work on their hearts neither,* 37, 38, 39, *verſes joyning all together, it holds forth that they were, and ſo all to whom the promiſe belongs (which is a Church Legacy) ought to be called Converts.*

The ANSWER.

That firſt Apoſtolical Inſtitution doth not juſtifie your ſeparation, your Argument may be retorted. Some have hence proved the lawful conſtitution of thoſe Churches you ſeparate from. By an outward profeſſion, which is the reſult of their Communication, you alledge that they were Converts. Were they reall Converts or

or Profeſſional? If real, this ingrafts them in the inviſible Church, as profeſſional they were intereſted in the viſible Church. This Profeſſion claimed the Appellation to be called Converts. But you argue that they were real Converts, becauſe no ordinary work wrought on their hearts. It is κατενύγησαν: *They were pricked in their hearts*: They had ſome ſting of conſcience, ſome gripings of remorſe at St. *Peters* Sermon. Reprobates are not always deſtitute of theſe corroſive Anxieties. Compunction of heart doth not amount to converſion (unleſs you will confound the critical differences of μεταμέλεια, and μετάνοια warranted by the Evangeliſts) It is a preparative to it, it is not an accompliſhment of it.

Matth. 3. 2. 27. 3. Semper cum μετάνοια cohæret ὁ σωφρονισμὸς· ſed μεταμέλεια declarat poſt aliquem rem factam anxium eſſe, Beza in Matth. 3.

In this inſtance it is expreſſed generally of all the Auditors without any limitation, in 37 verſe (*Now when they had heard this, they were pricked in their hearts*) But it is qualified, reſtrained, (*They that gladly received his word were baptized*) in the 41. *verſe*.

Vide Eraſm. in 2 *Cor.* 8.

If both qualifications of a bitter compunction, and a chearful attention

be linked, yet they will not compleat them to be true Converts. *Ananias* and *Saphira* are computed Members of this Congregation, you will not grant a true Converſion where there is a Recidivation. Their firſt Profeſſion is cenſured Diſſimulation.

The LETTER.

(2.) *How they were gathered into order, by withdrawing themſelves, yea, and that from a Church, not from Heathens, but from a froward Generation, ſuch as many profeſſing are, as great enemies to Chriſt as ever they were, though not in the ſame manner. For thoſe who will not have Chriſt to be their King to rule over them, are as great enemies to Chriſt, as thoſe that will not have him their Jeſus to ſave them,* Matth. 19. 14, & 27. Phil. 3. 18, 19.

The ANSWER.

I grant they were gathered into order, though your Medium doth not infer it. The Text ſets it out Parainetically (St. *Peters* admonition) not Hiſtorically

ſtorically (the execution the practice of it, in the 40 *verſe*) However they withdrew themſelves not from a Church (if you intend by a Church a Chriſtian Aſſembly) but from a Synagogue.

If from a Church in this Notion, you contradict your ſelf, this was not then the firſt Primitive Inſtitution (I ſuppoſe in your conſtruction, firſt Apoſtolical.) Before this numerous ſhole caught in the Fiſher of Souls Net, the Church after our Saviours Paſſion is ſummed up, comprehending one hundred and twenty Members. To collect three thouſand out of a Church, of an hundred and twenty were as prodigious Logick, as Arithmetick. I pray weigh the importance of the inference touching this Primitive Inſtitution. They withdrew from a Synagogue; (from Jews) therefore Chriſtians muſt withdraw from Chriſtians. They gathered to the Church, therefore a Church muſt be gathered from a Church.

Such deductions are ropes of Sand, *arena ſine calce*, as *Domitian* cenſured *Senecas* conciſe uncemented expreſſions

(an incoherence more laudable in ſentences than proofs) but not to digreſs. That froward Generation mentioned were eſpecially the Scribes and Phariſees, our Saviours profeſt embittered adverſaries. Himſelf titles them a generation of Vipers, and the Baptiſt ſo ſalutes them: It is Σώθητε ἀπὸ in the 40 *verſe*, Eſcape from the temporal imminent deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* (like the Angels counſel to *Lot* to quit *Sodom*) leſt you actually periſh in their infidelity, in their impenitency.

Matth. 12.34. *Matth.*3.7. *Gen.*19.17.

Becauſe thoſe Diſciples were adviſed to unſhackle themſelves of their Judaical fetters, who diſclaimed the *Meſſiah*, crucified him, who reputed him an Impoſtor, a Conjurer, a Malefactor.

Will you hence conclude a ſeparating from thoſe Chriſtian Brethren, who acknowledge him the Lamb of God (both Prieſt and Sacrifice) and the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah*; both a Saviour and Avenger? But here you blaſt and doom our Profeſſors (*Many profeſſing Chriſt are as great enemies as they were*) Our practical enmity (in the Church of *England*) is too too great, however

however it is in infirmity, not in obſtinacy; we humbly appeal to the Throne of Grace, of candor with the Apoſtle. What we would do, do we not, and what we would not, that do we. We dare not divorce thoſe Attributes God himſelf hath wedded. His Mercy is ſharpned with Juſtice, that we be not preſumptuous, and his Juſtice candid with Mercy (like a ſugred Pill) that we be not chilled with deſpair.

We own we reverence him as a Soveraign as Chriſt, and when being clogged with frailties, our obedience faulters, we have recourſe to him as Jeſus a Saviour.

Without this Divine Sanctuary, both you and we are expoſed to be condemned, as lewd wretched Caitiffs.

The Sacred Teſtimonies produced by you, are miſerably miſapplied. The firſt, Matth. 19. 14. *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.*

If you expound this literally, it is valid for the Baptiſm of Infants, it ſtrikes not us, but the Anabaptiſts. If you interpret it figuratively for thoſe

that are not plumed with pride, not envenomed with rancor. This Character at the firſt bluſh ſuits not with the grain of your ſeparation. Though I ſhall not charge, not revile any *(per me equidem ſint omnia protinus alba)* yet I would humbly admoniſh all. It is not the die of meekneſs and lowlineſs, to juſtifie your ſelves, and condemn others.

Your next Teſtimony is *Matth.* 19. 27. *Behold we have forſaken all, and followed thee.* This ſquares better with the condition of the Church of *England*, than of your ſeparation, for that hath improved, not empaired your Temporalities. Plead this when you are Confeſſors, or Martyrs, not before.

Your third Teſtimony is *Phil.* 3. 18, 19. *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies to the croſs of Chriſt, whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe god is their belly, their ſhame, who mind earthly things.*

Sub nomine Chriſti Judaiſmum prædicantes colendum Amb. m. 3. pa. 19.

In the Judgement of Expoſitors the Apoſtle there deſcyphers Jewiſh Seducers or Chriſtians Judaiſing, enemies

enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt, who would ſhelter their Religion with Circumciſion to prevent perſecution. (Judaiſm being tolerated after Chriſtianity was condemned) who would not be damnified by the Goſpel, who like *Cameleons* aſſumed all ſhapes; faſhioned their Tenets and Principles to Emergencies, who eeked out Chriſt with *Moſes*.

Inimici crucis quia ne quid paterentur propter Chriſtum, miſcebant cum Chriſto Moſem, & prædicabant neceſſariam eſſe circumciſionem, Gal. 6. Hac in parte gratificantes Judæis. Zanch. in 3. ph. vide Aquin. Eſtium. Aret. Piſc. &c.

Though we are abundantly vicious in the Church of *England*, yet this guilt is not to be fix'd on our ſcore, let it ſtick where it will.

I beſeech you with melting bowels, do not thus dally with Gods Sacred Oracles (as you expect the ſolace of preſent Grace, and future Bliſs) let them not be heaped but weighed. Deal not with the eſtimate of them, as of counters for to ſignifie what you fancy.

The LETTER.

(3) *By the means and manner of their Converſion willingly* (ἑκὼν μένως, verſe 41.) verbo non ferro, *which is Gods way of planting* : *But Antichriſts* volumus, man-

mandamus, ſtatuimus, *by humane Power and Edicts, ſo I conceive moſt of* Englands *Converts are, the noiſe of axes and hammers, have been much heard in the building, be they what they will, knowledge, grace, conſcience or none, come in they muſt, ſubject they muſt; and thus whole Nations become Churches, and many Churches in a day contrary to thoſe,* Pſal. 110. 3. 2 Eſ. 1. 2. Zach. 4. 6. Rev. 12. 15, 16. 2 Cor. 9. 13.

The ANSWER.

My Judgement (at leaſt my Genius) prompts me to approve much rather directive, than coactive expedients in Religion; yet the beſt Worthies of the Church Ancient and Modern, allow both to have their fit ſeaſons and operations. The Word is the Planting, Inoculating, but the ſword is the Cutting, Pruning Inſtrument. This may lop off dead branches, though it cannot graft the living: Your inſtance of St. *Peters* chearful Auditors concerns the firſt ſtructure, not the repair of Religion (the Converſion, not the Reſtauration) We muſt diſtinguiſh the conſtituting

ſtituting, and the reforming of a Church, betwixt Infidels and Hereticks; betwixt the ignorance of Unbelievers not informed, and the ſtubbornneſs of Misbelievers, after they are convinced: betwixt thoſe that being erroneous vent ſpeculative innocent Tenets, and theſe that broach peſtilent fundamental Hereſies, or maintain practical Impieties, Enormities; nay, even in theſe with *Lipſius* betwixt *Errones* and *turbones*, betwixt thoſe that are *bono animo errantes* (in *Lactantius* words) thoſe that are imprudently ſeduced, and thoſe that impudenrly ſeduce. *Lipſ. in Polit.*

As to ſome of the Branches, the Magiſtrate bears not the Sword in vain: He may exerciſe a coercive penal Power, as to the means, though not immediately to the end; as to the profeſſion of what men believe, though he cannot conſtrain the belief of what men profeſs.

The Moſaical Laws were capital againſt Idolaters and Blaſphemers. This Authoritative coercive ſeverity in Religion, as it was preſcribed by God, ſo it was practiſed by *Nehemiah*, *Levit.* 24. 15, 16. *Deut.* 17. 5. *Nehem.*

Nehem. 13.21, 22. By *Josiah*, 2 *Chron.* 34.32,2. By *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 14. 4. Even *Manasses*, after he was reclaimed, was enflamed with this Zeal. Christian Princes trod their steps.

The spiritual penalties enacted by the four first general Councils (against *Arrius*, *Nestorius*, *Macedonius*, *Eutyches*) were ratified by temporal of Christian Emperors. To omit *Samosatenus*, sentenced by *Aurelianus Manes*. ---But I forbear. In this copious field;

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 29.

---*Inopem me copia fecit.*

I shall add only the Donatists chastised by the Sanctions of *Constantinus*, *Constantius*, *Valentinus*, *Gratianus*, *Theodosius*. This reiterated, reinforced rigor against the Donatists, was at first resented by St. *Austin*, but upon second thoughts vindicated, it having proved effectual for the reclaiming of many Donatists by their own confession.

Aug. Eph. 48.

Those very men, who have bitterly inveighed at an Imperial, legal, moderate severity against the Factors, for exploded, condemned Heresies, yet have

Athanas. in ep. Alex. de persec. Arrian.

have embraced all opportunities, to act tumultuous, furious cruelties upon the Assertors of the most approved renowned Tenets. Witness the *Arrians* in *Egypt* and *Palastine*, the *Circumcelliones* in *Africa*, the Anabaptists in *Germany*. Mr. *Cotton* vehemently pressed this Divinity in New *England*.

August. l. 1. contra Petil. ca. 24. 27. Baron. Tom. 3. Anno 348. Sleidan. de Cottons 3d. vial. p. 19. 20.

I hope you will not brand all the recited precedents with the black aspersion of Antichrists *volumus, mandamus*.

Converts of the Church of *England*, though derided in your Letter, were not Captives, not fettered but taught, not hurried, enforced, but perswaded preached to their Religion.

You object the noise of Axes and Hammers to be heard in the Building. This noise is no solecism in erecting a Fabrick, no nor in repairing it, and reducing into order a beam that is starting out. But I pray unpartially recollect your own station. How edifying is the noise of Drums and Guns? Not the Ordinances of the Temple, but the Camp (A Church Militant without a Trope) Had not Regiments

giments been Arguments, and Battels Proofs, and Victories Demonſtrations, your ſeparation might have been ſcanted, for Proſelites in this Climate, quickly have ſhifted Scenes, and like *Cato* on the Theatre vaniſh'd as ſoon as it appeared. So that the Church of *England* is rather conquered, than confuted, not foiled, *gladio oris, ſed ore gladii.*

Power and terror are the Pillars to ſupport your ſeparation, wealth and honour the allurements, the embelliſhments to engratiate it. Such prevalent Principles may fortifie, not juſtifie your ſeparation. By this Martial Topick the Bible muſt truckle to the Alcoran in the Greek Churches.

But you tax the Church of *England* for a promiſcuous, ungracious reception, compulſion (without regard of Knowledge, Conſcience, Grace) This confident Objection ſeconds the virulent imputation of the Romaniſts.

Were it ſo, that many Churches were like Miſhromes of a days growth, that whole Nations became Churches (ἀθρόως) by heaps, God were to be the more

more magnified for ſo miraculous a converſion. Were not three thouſand Souls the Converts of one Sermon. *Acts* 2.41.

In ſo numerous a Congregation there was no poſſibility of St. *Peters* punctual ſatisfaction of the perſonal knowledge, conſcience of each. If you look back to the Baptiſts Church, there appears a larger confluence. *Then went out to him Jeruſalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and they were baptiſed of him in Jordan, confeſſing their ſins.* Matth.3.5,6.

To cloſe with you. Do you charge the Church of *England* in its firſt Converſion, or Reformation. In its firſt Converſion there was no external force or power (nor δύναμις nor ἐξουσία) no influence but of conſcience, no Trumpet ſounded, but of the word, (that of *Iſaiah*) no Sword brandiſh'd, but of the Spirit (that of St. *Paul*) In its Reformation Catechiſms and Sermons took place of Edicts and Proclamations.

The Reformation was initiated by *Henry* the Eighth, improved by *Edward* the

the Sixth, compleated by Queen *Elizabeth*. The Scriptures being translated into Engliſh, many groſs Errors were gradually diſcountenanced, and at length fairly diſcarded (Papal Supremacy, Pardons, Merits, Images, Pilgrimages) under *Henry* the Eighth, *Edward* the Sixth made a further progreſs. During the ſtorm of the Marian Perſecution, the Blood of the Martyrs became the Seed of the Church. After that Tempeſt was blown over, the Pious Confeſſors reduced from confinement and baniſhment, became zealous Propagators of the Reformed Religion. Forrain Proteſtant Divines were entertained in *England* (*Peter Martyr* and *Bucer* for purging the Univerſities, that thoſe eminent Fountains might be no longer corrupted) *Moſes* and *Aaron* both cooperated, Commiſſioners aſſiſted with Preachers were diſperſt into every Canton of the Nation (the Bench being ſteered by the Pulpit.) The people were inſtructed, weaned, not conſtrained, not ſcared out of their ſuperſtition.

Sanguis Martyrum Semen Eccleſiæ, Tertul.

If you aim at Truth, not at Triumph

umph, to be furniſh'd for ſatisfaction, not cavil; the Hiſtorical Narratives of Biſhop *Goodwin* and *Cambden*: *Foxes* Acts and Monuments will plentifully inform you, in the holy and wary ſteps of the Reformation. Happy it is for the Church any way to be refined from its droſs. It better becomes us to magnifie the Divine Mercy, for the effects, the Fruits of ſo bleſſed a Reformation, than to quarrel for the Inſtruments, the Formalities, punctilioes of it, and inconſiderately to gratifie our common adverſary.

After your light skirmiſh of invectives (conſcience or none, *&c.*) you muſter up your grand Battalio Texts of Scripture, for a more vigorous aſſault, *Pſal.* 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall come willingly at the time of aſſembling.*

This Teſtimony argues for voluntary aſſmbling, not ſeparating. Such were the crowds of the Primitive Congregations, whoſe Allelujahs ſounded like claps of Thunder (ſaith St. *Ferom*) Thus Gods people the Jews thronged into his Temple.

Some deſert our Congregations,

becauſe they ſeem holy; diſguſting our Sacred Publick Ordinances out of their real prophaneneſs, and others abandon them, becauſe our Congregations, by reaſon of their mixtures, ſeem prophane, out of a formal critical Holineſs. Theſe extremes exempted, the reſt aſſemble with an alacrity of piety, who are affected with *Davids* ſolace to rejoyce, when any ſay, *Let us go to the houſe of the Lord.*

Statim ad obſequium præſto, licet violento imperio non cogantur. Calv. in 110.3.

Take the *Pſalmiſt* in what acception you pleaſe. Becauſe thoſe that are regenerated, are convened, and not conſtrained. Will you hence infer, that the unregenerate cannot by Edicts of Magiſtrates be conſtrained to the helps, and requiſite means that they may be regenerated. They may be compelled to be aſſembled, though not to be reclaimed (to come in, though not to worſhip when they are come in). Nay, unwilling Auditors may become willing Converts. St. *Auſtin* entred St. *Ambroſe* Church with an itching ear to carp, he departed with a bleeding heart to relent.

Auguſt in Confeſſ. l. 5.

This

This Answer sufficiently manifests the invalidity of your second Testimony, *Esa.*2.1,2. which is a prediction of the propagation of the Gospel, *All nations shall flow to it*, in the 2. *verse*. They shall serve God as St. *Ferom* expounds it. Both verses flourish out the solemnity of an unanimous Congregation, not the privacy of a disjoynted separation. If you will appropriate these Prophesies to your selves (like *Homers* Iliads contracted in a Nut-shell) I pray exclude not the next *verse*. *Swords broken to plowshares, and spears to pruning hooks.* The next text cited is *Zach.*4.6. *Neither by an army nor strength, but my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

This portion of Scripture is the interpretation of a Vision. Commentators apprehend *Zorobabel*, to whom the Vision was interpreted to be the Type of Christ. It is, saith *Vatablus*, a Propheſie of his Nativity, without humane concurrence. (*Mary* being over shadowed by the Holy Ghost) others expound it Historically of the

Zerub. typus Christi Jun. & Tremel. in ann. De Zerubbabel (i.) de Christo Nativitatem Christi prædicit qui nullo opere humano sed ex Spiritu Sancto conceptus, & natus ex virgine. Vatabl. 11. cap. 4. Zach. v. 6.

Non in Exercitu neq; in multitudine bellatorum sed in Spiritu Dei reductum populum & plenius reducendum & adversarios vastandos. Hier. in Zach. 4. 6.

Jews reſcued from their Captivity, only by the Divine Power, or Prophetically of the Church, guided and guarded ſoly by the Sacred Spirit. However, this doth not cotten with the web of your ſeparation, that hath a Martial Countenance and Aſſiſtance.

Whereas the Church of *England* hath no arm of fleſh to ſtrengthen it, no Army but the Heavenly Militia, no General but the Lord of Hoſts, no Banners but the Croſs.

Quot verbà, tot Myſteria, Hieron.

Your third Citation, *Rev.* 12. 15, 16.) is a Myſtery, the Application a Riddle. I muſt deſire you to be your own *Oedipus*. *And the ſerpent caſt out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman: that he might cauſe her to be carryed away of the flood.*

And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed up the flood which the dragon caſt out of his mouth.

Non me pudet fatere nescire quæ nescio. Tull.

What will you hence conclude, therefore compulſion is not allowable in Religion. Indeed I underſtand not the inference, and bluſh not to confeſs it.

Upon

Upon this occasion, let me inoffensively become an humble importunate suiter, that since you piously detest vain Oaths (wherein I highly commend your severity, and passionately desire, and press the imitation among our selves) so you would also dread the rash quotation of Scriptures. They are offences of the same batch, breaches of the same Precept. And if such Citations be applied to erroneous Opinions, it is to make God a stale for Satan, to put the Divine Stamps to the Devils Merchandise, to make Heaven a disguise, a varnish for Hell.

Your last Proof is 2 *Cor.* 9. 13. *Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorifie God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ; and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men.*

It is ὑποταγῇ τῆς ὁμολογίας, for the manifestation of compassion, God being glorified whilst the poor are relieved, Graces being testified by Alms. Set this on the Tenter-hooks to be rack'd, what deduction can you wrest to your advantage.

For ὁμολογιμίνν, *hoc charitatis officio palam declarata, Beza in* 2 *Cor.* 9.13.

The *Corinthians* were voluntarily

charitable (no extorted bounty) when they were converted, what is this to the means how they were converted? If it were ſo, yet I formerly granted the means of the firſt Converſion to Chriſtianity to be perſwaſive, not coactive.

The LETTER.

They are noted by their perſeverance, προσκαρτερουντες.

The ANSWER.

To indulge to you, that they all perſevered to the end (though that is not recorded, and I formerly ſpecified the revolt of ſome) this doth not wound the conſtant Members of the Church of *England*, nor blemiſh the Church for thoſe that are inconſtant. If you object this, as a cognizance of a ſeparate Church; I anſwer, you muſt yet plead your innocence, and leave the apology of perſeverance (if you merit it) to another Generation. But alas, doth not the preſent Generation teſtifie a daily Apoſtaſie among your ſelves.

Is

Is not the abuſe of Liberty by a licentiouſneſs of prophaneneſs turned blaſphemy. Browniſts corrupted to Anabaptiſts, Anabaptiſts to Seekers, Seekers to Quakers. What can the next lees be? but the dreggs of Atheiſm, and Barbariſm, unleſs the Jeſuit angle in our tronbled Waters. I relate not this ſcurrilouſly to ſcoff, but mournfully to condole. It is not the Sarcaſm of my Pen, but the anguiſh of my ſoul. Hereby God is diſhonoured, weak Chriſtians perverted, the Proteſtant Religion ſcandalled, the Church of *England*, which was the envy of Chriſtendom, become the obloquy of it.

The LETTER.

Laſtly, who were added 47 *verſe. Thoſe that were in an outward appearance in a ſtate of ſalvation, which we cannot ſay of moſt Parochial Churches, as yet they live,* 1 *Cor.*6.9,10.

The ANSWER.

If you preſs the ſame inſtance of

the firſt inſtitution, as your Method and Concluſion imports, that addition is expreſſed in the 41 *verſe*. No deſcription precedes in that *verſe*, but that they willingly heard the Word, and were baptized. *And the ſame day were added* (to the Church in *Bezas* tranſlation) *three thouſand ſouls*. The next *verſe* denotes their progreſs after admittance to be Members of the Church. All thoſe Fruits recited of Gods Sacred Ordinances. *The Apoſtles doctrine, fellowſhip, diſtribution, breaking of bread and prayers*, grow in our Parochial Aſſemblies. Though theſe our cluſters may be ſower Grapes to your ſeparate Palats, yet we hope, being ſweetned by Chriſt merits, they may be accepted as delicious Sacrifices by a gracious God.

Acts 2. 42.

The 47 *verſe* expreſly inſiſted on in your Letter, relates the ſucceeding daily ſpreading of the Goſpel, and therein the recompence of the Converts, not the apparence of their Converſion (*And the Lord added to the Church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.*)

You deny moſt of our Parochial Churches

Churches to be in the ſtate of Salvation. They ſtand or fall to their own Maſter; your ſelf muſt appear before the ſame dreadful Tribunal. *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs.* I pray ſuſpend your judgement till the Day of Judgement. Then the Sheep ſhall be ſorted, ſevered from the Goats. Till then touching the damnation of others it becomes you to be a Sceptick rather than a Critick. Thoſe you condemn have the ſeed of immortality (the Word of God) they have the Seals of the Divine Promiſes (the Sacraments) they invoke God for remiſſion, for whatever they offend him in. To prevent an eternal wrack, they caſt Anchor on the Merits of their Redeemer, (*Whoſoever believeth on him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*) They believe, though with much frailty; yet they implore mercy for that frailty; beſeeching God to ſtrengthen their weak belief, to help their unbelief, to pardon their misbelief. This is a ſtate of infirmity, not of infidelity.

1 Cor. 4. 5.

Joh. 3. 16.

As to your exception. There may be

be a doctrinal ſtate of Salvation, where there is not a practical evidence of Sanctification. There may be Sap in the Root, when there is no Verdure in the Branches, as in *David*, who weltered in luſt and blood for the ſpace of a year (as the Jewiſh Doctors compute) and yet trod not out of the pale, even of the viſible Church: How deformed would the complexion of *Davids* Soul appear in the glaſs of your cenſure (his lineaments being defaced with Murther and Adultery) yet the Divine Character is a ſpecious teſtimony of approbation. *A man after Gods own heart.* To omit *Solomon*, whom notwithſtanding the uncomely hue of an unholy life, you will not confidently exclude from being intereſted; owned among Gods people, nor yet in a hovering ſuſpence ſubſcribe to the Academick irreſolution of *Petrus Tenorius*, who cauſed him to be painted in his Chappel, one half in Heaven, the other in Hell. I ſhall recommend in this caſe to your ſerious conſideration two pregnant inſtances. The firſt is of *Aſa* who is recorded by the Holy Ghoſt, *That his heart was perfect all his days;*

Lorin. in Proleg. in Eccleſ.

2 *Chron.* 15. 17.

days (or upright as moſt Tranſlations expreſs) before the Lord (for the illuſtration of the Original) *He worſhipped God all his days, with a pure and ſincere heart*, ſaith *Vatablus*. And yet in the next Chapter, offences of a very black grain are charged upon him, his confidence in an army of fleſh, reſting on the King of *Aram*, in the ſeventh *verſe* his ungracious indignation, inceníed he was againſt the Prophet, whom he impriſoned (*Then Aſa was wroth with the Seer, and put him into priſon*, verſ. 10.) His tyrannical oppreſſion (*He oppreſſed certain of the people at the ſame time*, verſ. 10.) Laſtly, his deſertion of God in his viſitation (*He ſought not the Lord in his diſeaſe, but to the Phyſicians*, verſ 12. My ſecond inſtance is *Lot*, who in his deportment towards *Abraham* upon the difference ſtarted, acquitted himſelf neither humble nor charitable, whoſe magnified Hoſpitality was tainted with impiety, an unholy overture (to be his Daughters Pandor for to be a Protector of Strangers) that checked with the Principles of Nature, and of Grace. But his diſtemper and his inceſt were monſtrous

Puro corde deum coluit. Vatabl.

monſtrous blemiſhes, as if he would transfer *Sodom* to *Zoar*; a reiterated diſtemper and inceſt, wherein his drunkenneſs did not abate, but aggravate the guilt and horror of his wantonneſs (the cauſe being directly voluntary, though not the effect.) In this addition this cumulation of wickedneſs, the offence was the more heinous, becauſe Gods deliverance was exceeding gracious. The meditation of the burning of *Sodom* ſhould have kindled his zeal, not his luſt, ſhould have procured his Holineſs, not his diſſoluteneſs; yet notwithſtanding theſe Crimes and Prodigies, St *Peter* recites him with no branded *Epithet*. 'Tis *juſt Lot*, and *vexed his righteous ſoul*, (not his inceſtuous.)

2 *Pet.*2.7,8.

From theſe Inſtances I obſerve, that God judgeth not as man, not according to the outward integrity, but the inward ſincerity. A manifeſt offender may be a ſecret penitentiary. I preſs this only to moderate your rigor, to allay your acrimony in cenſuring, not to animate the ſecurity of others in ſinning. I wiſh I could write and ſpeak like *Pericles*, Thunder and Lightning

Lightning to terrifie, to blaſt their prophaneneſs.

But you prove your black doom out of 1 *Cor.*6.9,10. *Know you not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate perſons, nor abuſers of themſelves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners ſhall inherit the kingdom of God.*

Pariſhes I hope are not Idolaters, *&c.* Suppoſe your application to ſome parochial Members. The Apoſtle threatned not ſo much actual as habitual cuſtomary ſinners, as in St. *Johns* determination *(He that committeth ſin is of the Devil)* 'Tis ὁ ποιῶν ἁμαρτίαν, He that drives wickedneſs as a trade, contrives it as a deſign, purſues it as a delight. However you underſtand your quotation (whether of ſuch as are actually or habitually vitious) the menace is not fix'd on the Delinquent, unleſs impenitent. Our Parochial Churches cannot be pronounced by you to have ſplit on this Rock of impenitency. *Joh.*3.8.

The

The LETTER.

Thus far concerning that first institution, and so this practice was followed in all the Churches, that were constituted, none admitted Members but visibles, (I do not mean real Saints) which is only known to God, and herein the Apostles themselves, who had a far greater spirit of discerning than we have, were deceived, but as far as we can judge by a well guided, not blinded charity.

The ANSWER.

If your Rule for admission be rigorously pressed, how can men of different judgements, and repugnant spirits be admitted into separated Churches? Are not Contentions, Divisions, carnal brands? (*Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal?*)

1 Cor. 3. 3.

The visibility of Church Members and Saints is no more compatible with the profession of grosse Errours and Heresies in Doctrine, than the manifestation of foul vices of enormities in practice. And

And yet I preſume you will not unchurch at once all the Anabaptiſts, and other erroneous factious aſſemblies; nor among your ſelves exclude all ſuch who have been admitted, notwithſtanding ſome ſpiritual ſins, perhaps not undiſcerned, which if granted are pollutions of viſible ſanctity, no leſs than juſtly blamed Carnalities.

As for the Apoſtolical practice objected, as a pattern not copied out by the Church of *England* in admiſſion of Members. I pray diſtinguiſh the times of the infancy of a Church, and the proficiency, the growth of it. A proficiency of age was required in the infancy of the Church, an infancy of age allowed to be admitted in the proficiency of the Church (by Baptiſm.) For I underſtand no other Church admiſſion or imitation but that. Were perſons in ſome meaſure ripen'd for years and intellectuals only to be admitted Members of the Church of *England* (as in the Apoſtles time) the diſpute of a viſible qualification were no impertinency.

I pray add to this conſideration the Conſtitution of the Church of *England*

land in point of Confirmation (in imitation of the Primitive Purity of Christianity) without this debarring, any reception to the Eucharist: Which to a calm Opponent, will vindicate her admitting of Members, and embracing them. But to return more closely to your own Track.

The first Constitution you insist on, doth not prop your separation, no nor yet the following practices you alledge, but instance in no particulars (Fallacies being fairly shrowded in Generalities.) What Visibility of Sanctity was in *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. 13. *He believed and was baptized*, that is, he professed, pretended that he believed.

There was no other visible Saintship conspicuous in *Philip* the Eunuch, before his admission to the Church, but a naked profession (*I believe that Jesus Christ is that Son of God.*) The Jaylor and his Family were constituted Members of the Church (baptized) upon no other sanctified account than their attention to the Gospel preached, and a single exercise of compassion (*Washing the stripes of Paul and Silas.*) Those additi-

Acts 9. 39,40.

Acts 16.32,33.

additional Teſtimonies of rejoycing, and believing recorded in the *40th. verſe* were improvements, perfections after their admiſſion, not endowments, qualifications before it.

It is indeed expreſſed of *Cornelius* and his Domeſticks, that they were inſpired, before they were baptized; *(The holy Ghoſt fell on them which heard the word,* Acts 10.44.) Beſides the extraordinary Seaſon, well ſuiting with an extraordinary inſpiration; as for the appearing of this inſpiring, ſpeaking with tongues, it was *gratia gratis data*, not *gratum faciens* (as the School-men diſtinguiſh) a Grace, a Gift for the edification of others, not for the Salvation of themſelves.

As touching real Saints, you acknowledge that the Apoſtles, who had a far greater ſpirit of diſcerning than your ſelves, were deceived: They had a more diſcerning, but under favour, a leſs condemning Spirit. Yours is the Spirit of *Eliah*, not of *Paul*, of *Moſes*, not of Chriſt: It ſavours of Mount *Sina*, not *Sion*. The Apoſtles were deceived in miſapprehending evil men to be good, but you in miſ-

apprehending good men to be evil. They took Wolves for Sheep, because in Sheeps cloathing, because doctrinally Christians; But you take Sheep for Wolves, because straglingly, because practically Pagan. Nay, they are scarce allowed to be Sheep, when themselves stray not out of the Fold, because mingled with Wolves. This is the less innocent misconstruction. But you alledge you are directed by a well guided, not blinded Charity. That Charity that hath the Divine conduct is not like *Lamia* in *Plutarch* putting off the spectacles at home, and putting them on abroad, but is dim without, and quick sighted within. Vaunts not it self, insults not, 1 *Cor.* 13.4. (οὐ περπερεύεται) thinketh not evil, or imputeth not evil to any (as *Valla* and *Eras.* interpret it (οὐ λογίζεται) 1 *Cor.* 13.5. Charity shall cover a multitude of faults, (1 *Pet.* 4.8.) nay, an universality; many for all, as all for many, being reciprocal Phrases in the Scripture idiome. It hath a present efficacy, doth cover (according to the Syriack and Vulgar Latin Translations.) This being compared with *Prov.* 10. 12.

Vox à Perperie fratribus conficta quorum procacitas fabulis nobilitata. Erasm. vel à nomine, περπερος qu. περίπερος, secundum Hesych.

12. (whence it is probably esteemed; to be transcribed) it must be understood of the offences of others. Charity doth not light a Torch to blaze, but spread a vail to conceal, to enwrap them in obscurity, and silence; rather resembling *Briareus* with an hundred hands to relieve distresses; then *Argos*, with an hundred eyes to espie offences. An humble merciful errour (out of the Sphere of our own Chage) is more reconcileable with a well guided Charity, than an over severe censorious truth.

This Charity extenuates small lapses, aggravates not great, in doubtful cases is a candid interpreter, in manifest crimes mourns, but condemns not. Take St. *Bernards* descant on your own note (for the guidance of Charity) In the failing of others, excuse the intention, if you cannot the action, charge it on the score of ignorance, surprizal, casualty; If an offence be heinous, notorious, not to be defended or concealed, reflect upon your self with this Application. The Temptation was over vehement, if it had been in me thus prevalent, how had I been foiled

Excusa intentionem si opus non potes; puta ignorantiam, puta subreptionem, puta casum. Quod si omnem omnino dissimulationem rei certitudo recusat, suade nihilominus ipse tibi, & dicito apud temet ipsum: Vehemens nimis tentatio: Quid de me illa fecisset si accepisset in me similiter potestatem. Bernard. serm. 40. in Cantic.

foiled. To conclude this point, which alone may ſerve to unſting your ſeparation. In your rigorous ſentencing of Parochial Churches, your Zeal may be greater than your Charity, and that Zeal perhaps more enflamed than enlightned. *Gerſon* requires to the temperature of Zeal, Prudence, Benevolence, Perſeverance.

Sit zelus diſcretus, benevolus, conſtans. Gerſ.

The LETTER.

Parochial Churches, as confeſſed by Mr. Hooker *and others, are not* Jure Divino, *therefore of a humane conſtitution. I ſpeak not of conveniency but neceſſity, that every one of a Pariſh, muſt be of a Church.*

The ANSWER.

Mr. *Hooker* was a ſober ſtickler for Unity and Uniformity, πολλῶν ἀνὴρ ἄξιος ἀλλῶν. But if my memory be not a fraudulent Record, there is no ſuch paſſage extant in his Eccleſiaſtical Policy, though I confeſs it conſonant to his weighty Judgement, if rightly underſtood. The inconvenience of your

your ſeparate Churches is a conſequence proved by your conceſſion of the convenience of our Parochial Churches. A convenience it is of great antiquity, and importance. I ſhall take their riſe in the Weſtern Church from *Evariſtus* in the beginning of the ſecond Century. They were afterward more diſperſt and regulated by *Dionyſius* in the year 267, and by *Marcellus* in the year 305. From which date the Parochial Diviſion was generally embraced in all Chriſtian Territories. *Conſtantine* the Great, the firſt Chriſtian Emperour did by a ſolemn Law ſuppreſs all ſeparate Churches, allowing no Religious Aſſemblies, but in Cathedral or Parochial Churches for the prevention of clandeſtine Hereſies and Schiſmes. *Simplicius* was round with *Victorinus*, a famous Orator converted from Paganiſm to Chriſtianity, but ſequeſtring himſelf from Parochial Congregations (I will not account you in the Sacred Liſt of Chriſtians, unleſs I ſee you in the Church among them) A penalty was enacted for abſentors without neceſſary Diverſions by the *Elibertine* Council, the year 310. The

Sabell. Enn. 7. l. 4. Platina in vit. Evariſt. & Dion. beſides the teſtimony of *Damaſ. Onuph. Polyd. Virg. de Invent.*

Elib. Conc. Can. 21.

Conc. Chalced. Can. 6. Great Council of *Chalcedon* did debar any Ordination of Miniſters Ἀπολελυμένως, without a particular Title, or intereſt, without a Parochial Charge. A provident courſe (to reſtrain vagrant Levites) ſeconded, and reinforced by diverſe ſucceeding Councils. This was the wiſdom of the Primitive Chriſtians. But you object, this amounts only to a humane conſtitution. A Parochial Church is of a mixt nature; partly Divine, partly Humane. There is a threefold conſideration of a Divine Inſtitution.

Firſt, for the matter as well as the Power, the Author of it. This is Gods own Law, ſimply and purely Moral, its ſubject being abſolutely good in it ſelf, if commanded (in an Edict) abſolutely evil in its ſelf, if countermanded (in an Interdict, a Prohibition.) This Law is univerſally reducible to a natural dictate, a principle imprinted in the Souls of men: Of this ſtamp and mould are the Branches of the Moral Law, the Precepts of both Tables.

Secondly. There is a Divine Conſtitution, not for the convincing equi-

ty

ty of the Matter, but the binding Authority of the Power, the external impoſition of God, as a Lawgiver. Such was Gods charge to our Firſt Parents touching the prohibited Fruit in Paradiſe; The eating whereof was not forbidden becauſe evil, but evil becauſe forbidden.

3. Thirdly, a Conſtitution is Divine for the Matter, and not the Power, not immediately, but mediately, when the Precepts of men are grounded upon the Laws of God, on the Rules of Divine Equity.

In the preſent Queſtion touching Parochial Churches, The conſtitution is not entirely humane or poſitive (in the Schoolmens expreſſion) It is Divine in the third Conſideration, becauſe of its foundation. For though the circumſtantial individual reſpect (the preſent limits of Pariſhes as now ſorted) be humane, yet the ſubſtantial reſpect, that there be a regular limitation for bounds to Miniſters and People, is implicitely comprehended in theſe two grand Apoſtolical Canons, *Let all things be done to edification. Let all things be done decently, and in order.* The one being

1 *Cor.* 14. 26, 40.

the ſpiritual Canon, the other the Eccleſiaſtical; or the one diverting us from a pompous ſuperſtitious gayneſs, the other from a diſordered, unbeautified rudeneſs in Religion.

There is yet a more ſpecial Divine Foundation touching the ſubſtantial part. That Paſtors and Flocks ſhould have their diſtinct Relations and Limits, this being warranted by Apoſtolical Precept and Practice. *When Paul and Barnabas had ordained elders in every Church.* They committed the Churches they planted to ſeveral peculiar Paſtors, as *Junius* and *Tremelius* expound it. Thus St. *Paul* left *Titus* in *Creet* (which is titled by *Homer* Εκατόμπολις, dignified with an hundred Cities, to ordain Elders in every City, That ſo none ſhould be deſtitute of its own Presbyter, its conſtituted Paſtor, its local ſetled Miniſter. Hereby the labour (in the Miniſterial Charge) becomes lighter, the care the exacter, ſaith *Theoph.*

Acts 14. 23. *Apoſtoli plantatas Eccleſias commiſerunt propriis paſtoribus, Jun. & Trem.*

Il. 2.

1 *Tit.* 5.

Ἑκάστην πόλιν ἰδίαν ποιμένα ἔχειν, ἵνα γὰρ ἡ ὁ πόνος κουφότερος ἡ ἐπιμέλεια ἀκριβεστέρα. Theoph.

The Apoſtle knits together the mutual ſpecial tye of Duty, *Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves, for they watch for your ſouls,*

ſouls, as they that muſt give an account, Heb. 13. 17.
that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is not profitable for you.

Theſe Duties cannot commodiouſly, conſcienciouſly be diſcharged, without diſtinction of charges, deſignation, reſtriction of places. Vigilance for ſouls is obſtructed by diſtance. The account alſo muſt needs be hudled, when the charge is confuſed. The Apoſtles had a general Oecumenical commiſſion qualified with unparallel'd endowments (for Languages, for Miracles) ſuitable to ſuch diſperſed, unbounded employments. The Time, Meſſage, and Meſſengers were extraordinary. This univerſall Embaſſy is not exemplary.

Our bounded Parochial Churches are but Copies of the Jewiſh diviſion by Synagogues, which though they were not of Divine Right *à priori* by Injunction, yet they were *à poſteriori* by the approbation of Chriſt, and the Apoſtles, and of greater Antiquity, than the Temple it ſelf. Theſe Parochial Boundaries are ſingular Expedients for Piety and Regularity, not *Pſal.* 74. 8.

only

only convenient but neceſſary (as to order and obedience in this Nation) till there be a valid legal repeal of ſo valid and legal a conſtitution.

The LETTER.

If the godly in England, *whether in the bound of Pariſhes or not, I mean Profeſſors in Doctrine, and Practice, though failing in ſome Circumſtantials of Diſcipline, be the Churches, we own no ſeparation from them, but a reformation we deſire, and ſhall willingly ſit down, and walk with ſuch a people of ſuch a Pariſh, and then I ſuppoſe the ſeparation lies on the other part, that have withdrawn themſelves from their firſt Covenant,* Jude 19. *there deſcribed. Such are moſt of our people,* Acts 5.13.

The ANSWER.

You profeſs you will embrace the Society of Godly Profeſſors in Doctrine and Practice, though Parochial; I demand how far, perhaps for united Devotion and Attention (for publick Prayers and Sermons) not for Sacramental

mental Duties (by the mildeſt Principles of ſemiſeparatiſm) there muſt be a Reformation of Diſcipline, an exact Shibboleth, a new Covenant, a particular ſatisfaction for the Holineſs, the ſuitableneſs of diſpoſition to precede, to qualifie for theſe. What do you indulge the moſt accompliſh'd holieſt Parochial Chriſtian more, than to a Mahumetan, an Indian, whom you will not deprive of theſe Expedients for Converſion, as ſubſervient to the collecting of a Church.

You will not ſeparate from Doctrinal, and Practical Profeſſors in Pariſhes; but it is upon this tacite condition, that they ſeparate from Parochial Congregations. You will not communicate with them in ſuch a mixture. So that this ſolemn flouriſh, if ſifted, will be reſolved into the emptieſt kind of Fallacy, *Petitio principii.* The begging of the Queſtion.

You transfer the ſeparation on our Parochial Churches. This Divinity is as Orthodox, as *Copernicus* his Philoſophy (that the Earth moves, and the Sun ſtands ſtill) It is not unlike the Optick miſtake of thoſe, that firſt ſet out

out to Sea, who launching out of a Haven, imagine the Port the Shore moves, departs from them, not they from the Port the Shore.

Virgil. ——*Terræq urbesq; recedunt.*

Beware leſt your ſelf be imbarqued in a floating Veſſel, whilſt the Church of *England* is fixt on a Rock. It ſeparates not from you, it was never a Branch of your Tree, a Member of your Body, but you of its.

But you charge us with the cauſe of the ſeparation, having withdrawn our ſelves from our firſt Covenant. It is violated, not abrogated, though not punctually obſerved, yet not abſolutely renounced, a diſobedience, but not a defiance. Though withdrawn, yet we make our penitent approaches to the Throne of Grace, to renew our Covenant of Baptiſm by the Euchariſt.

What withdrawing do you pitch on to warrant your ſeparating, not from diſcipline: We never embraced yours. This is confeſt by your ſelves, no foundation of ſeparation; Not from Doctrine

Doctrine: This you tax not. There remains for the ſole cauſe, a practical prophaneneſs. This is a fallacious objection. *Non cauſa pro cauſa. A falſe cauſe for a true.*

Were not the Sons of *Eli* practically vitious, ſcandalous Sons of *Belial*? yet the people that communicated with them, were Gods people in the *29th verſe*. Though men were induced to abhor the Sacrifices for the Prieſts impieties in the *17th verſe*, yet thereby they were tempted to tranſgreſs (*You make the Lords people to tranſgreſs*, in the *24 verſe*) This tranſgreſſion was a ſeparation, a deſerting the Aſſembly. Not to ſerve the Lord (according to the Septuagint) to wit, publickly with the Congregation.

1 *Sam.*2.12.

Efficitis ut hic populus veniat ad oblatas victimas. Vatabl.

Μὴ λατρεύειν τῷ κυρίῳ. Sept.

This viſible prophaneneſs being recorded in every viſible Church, ſpecified in Scripture without the effect, or attempt of ſevering, disjoynting in celebrating Gods Ordinances, renders your ſeparation as unexcuſable, as it is unwarrantable.

Adams Family was the one and only viſible Church (*una & unica*) for a time; therein there was a *Cain* as well as

as an *Abel*, both sacrificed, though both were not sanctified.

Cains pollution was not covert. *Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof*, Gen.4.4. τὰ ἔκλεκτα, saith *Philo*, the first and the best. But of *Cain* it is expressed, he brought of the Fruit, not the first Fruits, τὰ τυχόντα, saith *Chrysostom*, what first came to hand, his oblation was scanted for the quantity (according to the *Sceptuagint*, and the Greek Fathers) at least tainted in quality. In *Abrahams* Family (a visible Church) there was an *Ismael* as well as *Isaac* (in *Isaac*'s house an *Esau*, as well as *Jacob*. Among the Patriarchs (*Jacobs* Issue) *Simeon* and *Levi*, with *Joseph* and *Benjamin*. In *Noahs* Ark (a Type of the Church) there was a *Cham*, a *Judas* among the Apostles, a *Nicholas* among the Deacons.

Ὀρθῶς δὲ μὴ δίκλης. Sept.

To omit the manifest mixtures of the *Jewish*, *Corinthian*, *Galatian*, *Asian* Churches (recited in the second and fifth Chapters of the *Revel.*) Each whereof was a Grove wherein every Tree was not a Myrtle, an Edifice, wherein every Stone was not a Marble.

The

The Church delineated by the Apoſtles Pencil, *without ſpot and wrinkle*, is to be apprehended as adorned by Chriſts imputed Merits, as with reſplendent Robes, not as dreſs'd with its own ſordid Raggs, not as clad with its own frailties, ſtained with its own deformities. 'Tis expreſſed in the front of the *verſe (That he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious Church)* Chriſt preſents the Church ſpecious, glorious in himſelf, but the Church exhibits not it ſelf thus to the World. Ephes. 5. 27.

The Church deſcribed *holy and without blemiſh*, in the cloſe of the ſame 27 *verſe*, is not Militant but Triumphant. The one is a Casket of true and falſe Pearls; the other a Cabinet of true Diamonds and Rubies to be ſelected and ſevered from the Counterfeit and adulterate, in the day that God ſhall make up his Jewels. But of this only ἐν παρόδῳ, by way of illuſtration, as an anticipation of an objection.

ubicunq; in his libris commemoravi Eccleſiam non habentem maculam aut rugam, non ſic accipiendum eſt quaſi jam ſit, ſed quæ præparatur, ut ſit quando apparebit etiam glorioſa. Auguſt. Retract. l. 2. c. 8. Sine macula & ruga non eſt in præſentia ſed erit in die Jeſu Chriſti. Pet. Mart. in l. Com.

I proceed to thoſe Texts you cite to juſtifie your ſeparation, *Ep.* of *Jude* 19. *Theſe men ſeparate themſelves, being ſenſual, having not the Spirit.* This

is

is generally applied by Expoſitors to Sectaries. Take heed this is not *brutum fulmen*, if rightly apprehended, it is not to be ſported but trembled at. We may play the Sophiſters with men, but cannot delude our God.

This is a Bill to indict, no Plea to vindicate your ſeparation; it is active, not paſſive, you ſeparate your ſelves, (a ſpice of ſingularity) diſcard others. The Apoſtle ſhadows out the occaſion of a real ſeparation, an imaginary perfection keeping aloof from ſenſual men (as refined from ſuch droſs) as being ſpiritual. But the Apoſtle aſſwageth this tumor, blaſts this haughty fancy, checks it as a carnal ſymptom (being ſenſual, having not the Spirit.)

Mr. Perkins *on the Epiſtle of St Jude v.9.*

I ſhall recommend to you Mr. *Perkins* Expoſition of this Teſtimony, comparing it with his Comment to the ſame effect on the firſt Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Galatians* the 2 *verſe*, and his Doctrinal Obſervation is this (I ſhall only abbreviate that deſcant he hath enlarged) It is a great ſin for a man to ſeparate himſelf from the Aſſembly of Gods people, *Heb.* 10. 25. It is our duty

duty to keep Unity, *Epheſ.* 4. 3. Upon this Occaſion he ſtarts this Queſtion.

Whether if there be Errors in the Church, we may ſeparate our ſelves? His Judicious Reſolution is this. Errors are either practical in Manners, or doctrinal in Tenets. For vitious Manners we may not ſeparate; *Lot* did it not. The Jews might not do it from the Scribes and Phariſees, becauſe they ſate in *Moſes* Chair.

It is Mr. Perkins *expreſs amplification on the Epiſtle to the Galatians the firſt Chapter and ſecond verſe. If faults appear in the lives of Miniſters and People, ſo long as true Religion is taught, it is a Church, and ſo to be eſteemed, and the Miniſters muſt be heard, Matth.* 23. 1.

Though we may not ſeparate from ſuch corrupt perſons in the publick Aſſemblies, yet we may in private converſation, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11.

If the Church err in Doctrine, it is to be conſidered whether the error be in a point ſubſtantial, fundamental or not? if in a point ſubſtantial, fundamental, whether upon infirmity, or obſtinacy? if of frailty, we may not ſeparate, as in *Corinth* and *Galatia*.

If a Church err in the foundation openly, obſtinately, a ſeparation may

be made, 1 *Tim.*4.5. (yet the error being in ſome, not in all, it remains a Church as *Corinth* did.)

If the Error be in ſmaller points, not fundamental, we may not ſeparate: They which build upon the foundation of hay and ſtubble of erroneous opinon, may be ſaved, 1 *Cor.* 3.25.

Mr. *Perkins* concludeth that no man can ſeparate from the Church of *England* with a good Conſcience, ſince it teacheth, obeyeth, believeth the Doctrine of the Prophets and Apoſtles. In the moſt juſtifiable cauſe of Separation he requires examination, conviction, cenſure, (or condemnation.) To ſeparate without examination is not Piety but Phrenſie. *No man can judge aright of that* (ſaith the Philoſopher) *whereof he is ignorant.* No man can well determine, what he doth not well diſcuſs. *Qui ad pauca reſpicit de facili pronunciat.*

*Ariſt. l.*1.*Etb.*

2. To ſeparate without conviction is levity, to be like clouds, hovering with every ſudden gale of Doctrine.

Mr. *Perkins* condemns the want of Mo-

Moderation in thoſe, that condemn the Church of *England* without ſufficient conviction.

If any object admonition by Books; take the ſame Authors reſolute aſſertion, his aſſeveration for a ſatisfactory reply.

I ſay again, there are groſſer faults in ſome of thoſe Books, than any of the faults that they reprove in the Church of *England*, and that Books are not fit to convince, eſpecially a Church.

Mr. Perkins *on the Epiſtle to the Galatians the firſt Chapter and ſecond verſ.*

3. To ſeparate without a Juridical Cenſure, an Authoritative, a Synodical Doom, is at leaſt a haſty irregularity.

Otherwiſe Separation paves a Cauſey to Confuſion; Schiſms will be endleſs, Synods needleſs.

If two or three Members of your new Collected Church, ſhould ſeparate from your Church, branding it to be a corrupt Church, not lawfully to be communicated with; your ſelves would eſteem thoſe two or three to be very inconſiderable for number or power, for to be ballanced with that Collected Church, whereof they are,

or, as you alledge, ought to be Members. I pray consider, the disproportion is far greater betwixt your Collected Church, and the National Church of *England*.

To wind up this bottom: That you have been prudent in Examination, shall be τὸ διδόμενον, pass for granted; but it remains for τὸ ζητούμενον, whether your conviction of the Church of *England* hath been sufficient, or your censure your condemnation. Nay, it is a Question put out of all Question negatively, since that the Church of *England* hath not been disproved by any Demonstrative Arguments upon Scripture Principles, to be no truly constituted Church; nor yet condemned by any Synod. Till then I pray forbear to separate from it. I shall add by way of *Prolepsis*. If you here object, that in being thus scrupulous, you may be irrecoverably involved in guilt, for want of a Synodical Condemnation, which is not in your power. I answer, In case of this defect there is allowable only a partial Separation in the Church, not a total from the Church. Or a Negative Separation

paration, by not asserting, abetting, countenancing, owning erroneous Tenets, or vitious enormous Practices; not a positive separation by constituting a new visible Church, by deserting the Old in its Religious Duties and Assemblies.

The best Christians in the Church of *Corinth* and *Galatia*, nay, St. *Paul* himself did separate no otherwise; when there was conspicuous in the one a tincture of Paganism, in the point of Resurrection; in the other a spot of Judaism, in point of Justification. They severed doctrinally (as to those particulars) not personally, as to the sacred publick Ordinances.

As to your Quotation of St. *Jude*, I shall fortifie Mr. *Perkins* Judgement with Mr. *Arthur Hilderſhams* (upon *John* 4.45. *Lect.* 35.) Such as separate from our Churches upon pretence of the corruptions, that are in them. These are marked with a black coal, by *Jude* 19. *These be they who separate themselves, being sensual, having not the Spirit.* But herein Christians must learn wisely to distinguish such as are unjustly separated by others from

the Church Aſſemblies; and ſuch as voluntarily ſeparate themſelves; Theſe deſerve to be called Schiſmaticks, and not the others. Neither are they to be counted Schiſmaticks, as though they dare not be Agents or Practiſers of any corruption that remaineth in the Church, yet can bear and tolerate them as burthens, without forſaking the Church for them. To this ſort I will ſay no more, but wiſh them well to weigh the Examples of Gods Servants, that have been mentioned in this Doctrine, which frequented ſo diligently the publick Worſhip of God in *Jeruſalem*, when there were far greater corruptions, both in the Prieſts, and People, and Worſhip it ſelf, than can be found in ours. What Mr. *Hilderſham* here winds up is unravel'd in his thirty ſixth Lecture; Becauſe the Author is not lyable to your exception, and proceeds upon Scripture Principles (your own appeal) who hath been reputed by Dr. *Willet*, *Malleus Schiſmaticorum qui vulgo vocantur Browniſtæ*, I ſhall here inſert what himſelf hath dilated in his own Language without contracting or altering it.

Upon

Upon *John* 4. 22.

We know what we worſhip, for ſalvation is of the Jews.

Hereupon Mr. *Hilderſham* obſerveth, that our Saviour in commending the Worſhip and Religion of the Jews, makes himſelf one of their number, acknowledgeth himſelf a Member of their Church, profeſſeth that himſelf did worſhip God as they did; from whence this Doctrine ariſeth for our Inſtruction.

That thoſe Aſſemblies that enjoy the Word and Doctrine of Salvation, though they have many corruptions remaining in them, are to be acknowledged the true Churches of God, and ſuch as none of the faithful may make ſeparation from.

We ſhall need no further proof of this Doctrine, than the example of our Saviour himſelf. If we conſider of the one ſide how corrupt the ſtate of the Jews Church was in his time, and on the other, how far our Saviour did communicate with them.

For the firſt, what the ſtate of the

Church was in his time, we may know, if we conſider. Firſt, What the Prieſts and Teachers were themſelves, that had the ordering of God's Worſhip. Secondly, What the people were with whom he was to joyn in Gods Worſhip. Thirdly, What the Worſhip it ſelf was, wherein he was to communicate.

Firſt, The Prieſts and Teachers were ignorant and unlearned, *Matth.*23.16. Secondly, They were wicked and ungodly, *Matth.*23.3. Thirdly, They had a corrupt and unlawful entrance into their Calling, yea, even the high Prieſt himſelf. For whereas by Gods Ordinance he was to hold that Office during life, their Office was bought and ſold, and made Annual, *John* 11. 49. *Caiphas* was high Prieſt for that year.

And what were the people? ſurely the moſt of them in all places were notoriouſly and obſtinately wicked. In *Nazareth*, where he had lived moſt; See what they were, *Luke* 4. 28, 29. *All that were in the ſynagogue, when they heard this doctrine, were filled with wrath, and roſe up, and thruſt him*

him out of the city, and led him to the edge of an hill to caſt him down headlong. But were they better in other places. *He upbraided all the cities, where moſt of his great works were done. Wo be to thee, Chorazin, Wo be to thee, Bethſaiada,* Matth. 11. 20, 21. And were the people of *Jeruſalem* any better. You ſhall perceive that by that affection they ſhewed at the Paſſion of our Saviour, when *Pilate* a Gentile made ſuch an offer to them. *Luke* 23. 18. *All the multitude cryed at once, Not him, but Barabbas.* And Matth. 27. 25. *When Pilate had waſhed his hands, and proteſted Chriſts innocency, Then anſwered all the people, and ſaid deſperately, His blood be on us and our children.*

Thirdly, The Worſhip it ſelf that was uſed in the Church, had many corruptions in it. They uſed many ſuperſtitions, the obſervation whereof they urged more ſtrictly than the commandments and Ordinances of God, *Mark* 7.9. The Temple was prophaned, and made a *den of thieves,* Matth. 21. 12, 13. The Diſcipline and Cenſures of the Church were ſhamefully

fully abuſed, *John* 9. 22. The Jews had decreed, that if any did confeſs that Jeſus was Chriſt, he ſhould be Excommunicated *ipſo facto*. The Doctrine was corrupt in many points, as you ſhall find, *Matth.* 5. 21, 46. Some corruptions alſo were crept into the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments; for they kept a day after our Saviour, who obſerved the juſt time appointed by God, *John* 19. 17. The day of his Paſſion was but the day of the Preparation to the Paſſover.

Thus have we ſeen how corrupt the ſtate of the Church was: And yet mark how our Saviour made no ſeparation from it, but communicated with it in the Worſhip of God.

1. When he was an Infant, he was Circumciſed, and by that Sacrament incorporated into the Church, *Luke* 2.21.

2. When his Mother was purified, he was brought into the Temple, and preſented to the Lord, and an oblation was given for him as for other children, *Luke* 2.22.

3. He was content to be a hearer of ſuch Teachers, that taught in the Church, *Luk.*2.46. 4. He

4. He was every Sabbath wont to joyn in Publick Prayer with the Congregation that was at *Nazareth*, Luke 4.16.

5. He received the Sacrament of Baptiſm in a Congregation of the people, *Luke* 3. 21. *When all the people were baptized, he was baptized alſo.*

6. He communicated in the Paſſover with the People and the Prieſts, *John* 2.13.

7. He allowed his Diſciples to hear theſe Teachers, *Matth.* 23. 12. Yea, he commanded the Leper, whom he had cleanſed, to go and ſhew himſelf to the Prieſt, and offer his gift in the Temple, *Matth.*8.4.

The reaſons why all men are bound to count ſuch Aſſemblies true Churches as enjoy the Word and Doctrine of Salvation, and may not ſeparate from them for their corruptions, are theſe.

1. So long as God continues his Word and Doctrine of Salvation to a people, ſo long it is evident God dwells among them, and hath not forſaken them. *I will ſet my tabernacle among you*: By which he meaneth his ſolemn Worſhip

Worſhip, whereof this is a principal part, *Levit.*26.11,12. *Pſal.*76.12. And till God hath forſaken a Church, none may forſake it. For ſhall we be holier, and hate corruption more than the Lord? It is no ſufficient warrant for any to ſeparate from a Church, becauſe it is guilty of ſuch ſins and corruptions, as deſerve God ſhould forſake it, and for which God hath threatned in his Word, that he will forſake it; till it may appear to us God hath indeed forſaken it, and put in execution that which he hath juſtly threatned againſt it, no man may forſake it. Though Adultery (either in Man or Wife) be a juſt cauſe of ſeparation, and that the Bond of Wedlock ſhould be broken, ſo as the innocent party may juſtly forſake the offender, yet till a Bill of Divorcement have paſt between them, they ſtill remain Man and Wife, notwithſtanding that ſin. The Woman, whom her Husband hath wronged in that kind, is called his Wife, *Mal.* 2.15. *Eſau* juſtly deſerved to looſe the Prerogative of his Birth-right and Superiority he had over his Brother, when he had deſpiſed

ſpiſed and ſold it, *Gen.* 25. 34. And *Saul* to be deprived of his Kingdom; yea, God by his Decree and Oracle had ſaid of *Eſau* and *Jacob*: *The elder ſhall ſerve the younger*, Gen. 25. 23. and of *Saul* and *David*, that he had rejected the one, and appointed the other to Reign in his ſtead, 1 *Sam.* 13. 14. and 15. 23, 26, 28. And yet till the Lord ſaw it good to put this Decree and Oracle in execution, and actually to depoſe the one from his Birth-right, and the other from his Kingdom, *Jacob* acknowledgeth *Eſau* his Superior, his Lord, *Gen.* 32. 4, 5. and ſo did *David* *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 24. 7, 9. So though a Church, for the many corruptions in it be unworthy the name of Chriſts Church, and be alſo ſuch as the Lord hath threatned to make no Church, yet till the Lord hath put this his threat in execution, and takes away his Tabernacle and Worſhip from it, it is ſtill to be acknowledged and reverenced, as the Church of Chriſt.

2. Becauſe no ſeparation may be made from thoſe Aſſemblies, where men may be aſſured to find and attain Salvation. *Lord to whom ſhall we go, thou*

thou haſt the Word of eternal life? ſaith *Peter* to our Saviour, accounting this as a ſufficient reaſon why they might not leave him, *Joh*n 6. 68. But men may be ſure to find Salvation in ſuch Aſſemblies, where the Miniſtery of the Word and Doctrine of Salvation is continued. For the Word and Doctrine of Chriſt is called Salvation here: and *Heb.* 2. 3. becauſe it is the ordinary means ordained of God to bring men to Salvation, *Rom.* 1. 16. 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. Yea it is at one time or other effectual in all Gods Elect that do enjoy it.

James 1. 21. Calls it *the engrafted word, which is able to ſave your ſouls.*

Uſe 1. To teach us what to judge of our Church, and the Browniſts that ſeparate from it. 1. We cannot deny it, but there is juſt cauſe of fear that God may take away his Tabernacle from amongſt us, and remove our Candleſtick; Even the general decay of our firſt Love may cauſe us to fear it, *Apoc.* 2. 5. And that a great neglect of the Cenſures of the Church upon ſcandalous offenders, in reſpect of

of that the Apoſtle ſaith, *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, 1 Cor. 5. 6. But eſpecially the general increaſe of all filthy abominable ſins in the Land, *Deut.* 32. 14. *Eccleſ.* 8. 6. Though we acknowledge our Church to be a true Church, yet we may not communicate with it in any corruptions that ſhall be detected or approved to be in it. Herein we have our Saviours Example to guide us, though he eſteemed the Church of the Jews to be a true Church, and joyned with it in Gods Worſhip, yet would he not communicate with it in the leaſt corruption, he would not uſe ſo much as their ſuperſtitious purification, *Mark* 7. 6, 7. when they put off the Paſſover a day longer than God appointed, he would not joyn with them in that, *Matth.* 26. 17.

3. We ſhould mourn for, and ſhew our diſlike to thoſe things that are evil in our Church, *Ezek.* 9. 4. So did Chriſt, *Luke* 19. 41. But we may not ſeparate our ſelves, nor deny it to be a true Church, for the reaſons above alledged.

Thus far Mr. *Arthur Hilderſham* proceeds in 36 *Lect.*

Your

Your first Citation out of St. *Jude* hath hitherto detained me, and occasioned this copious Digression not impertinent to the main of the Question.

Your next Testimony to acquit your selves, and to brand most of our people, is *Acts* 5.13.

And of the rest durst no man joyn himself to them, but the people magnified them.

None durst joyn in an Hypocritical way, as *Ananias* and *Saphira* did. The rest may be expounded, either of the Church Members, who out of reverence kept distance from the Apostles (if compared with the 11 *verse*) Or else the rest were the potent Jewish Adversaries of the Apostles, who affrighted with that severe Miracle of Judicature, no sooner pronounced than executed on *Ananias* and *Saphira*, durst not assault or approach not κολλᾶσθαι, not close, or not encounter. The Syriack comprehends both.

Because after so rigorous miraculous a doom, the Believers reverenced the Apostles, or the Unbelievers dreaded

dreaded, and the promiſcuous multitude extolled them: Make what rational inference you pleaſe, it is an impertinence to this Queſtion.

The LETTER.

I do not find National Churches promiſed and warranted in the day of the Goſpel, but many Nations ſhall come into the Church, not all of a Nation, nor all in a Nation to be a Church, but of every People, Kindred and Nation God would make up his Church; Acts. 10. 35.

The ANSWER.

I have been often ſadden'd and amazed at the tart confidence of ſome of your party in excepting, girding at a National Church, as if it were a ſtrange *Chimæra*, a ridiculous Paradox (like the antient fate of the opinion of the avouching the Antipodes) Whereas there is a Domeſtical Church mentioned, *Rom.* 16. 5. (*Greet the church that is in their houſe*) and in 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. (*With the church that is in their*

house) This notion of a Church is your darling. I pray examine with ſober reaſon without diſtemper of paſſion or prejudice. Is there not a gradual aſcent from a Church Oeconomical, to a Church Oecumenical? What are Cities, Kingdoms, States, but Families dilated, multiplied? A Domeſtical Church is a National contracted; a National Church is a Domeſtical enlarged. A Parochial intervenes, of a larger extent than a Domeſtical, a leſſer than a National. Such was the Church as *Cenchrea*. The Profeſſors of ſaving Truth, if abridged within the narrow limits of a houſe are a Domeſtical Church, if more numerous diſperſt within the circuit, the Territories of a Nation, they are to be eſteemed a National Church, though all Individuals of the Nation were not Profeſſors.

The pregnant Scripture Teſtimonies ſhould ſilence all Cavils touching this Title. Are there not recorded Churches of *Judea, Samaria, Galilee*? Act. 9, 31. A Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. 2 *Ep.* 1. 1. The Church of the *Theſſalonians*, 1 *Ep.* 1. 1. 2 *Ep.* 1. 1. The Churches

Churches of *Epheſus*, *Smyrna*, *Pergamus*, *Thyatira*, Rev. 2. 1, 8, 12, 18. The Churches of *Sardi*, *Philadelphia*, Rev. 3. 1, 2, 10. Why then ſhould the Church of *England* ſound ſo prodigious a name? Herein we ſwerve not from the Language of the pureſt Antiquity, nor the Modern cuſtomary expreſſion (uſe being the ſolemn dictator for words,

Quem penes arbitrium, juſq; eſt, & norma loquendi.)

You will probably retort, all of the Nation are not of the Church of *England*, nor yet were all the Inhabitants of *Samaria*, *Galilee*, *Smyrna*, *Philadelphia* Members of thoſe Churches: Thoſe that were, ſerved to denominate: *Inde denominatio unde dominatio.*

After Hiſtories we need not enquire for Propheſies, to examine whether National Churches were foretold when they are fulfilled.

That many Nations ſhall come into the Church, may be underſtood of the inviſible Church, for *Genera ſingulorum*;

lorum, of the visible Church for *singula generum*.

That of every Nation, Kindred and People, God will make up his Church, is true of the Church Catholick, of which your first citation may be understood in the universal latitude propounded. (*All nations shall flow to it.*)

Your second Sacred Citation is *Act.* x. 35. *But in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*

This demolisheth the partition of Judaism, repeals the engrossing priviledge of *Palestine*: This invests every Nation with a capacity of some Members of the invisible Church; it doth divest no Nation of a possibility of being an intire visible Church, even as the Jews were in an inclusive, though not as they were in an exclusive sense.

The LETTER.

We shall bring our selves back to the Pedagogy of the Jews, from which we are freed by Christ. We must have National

National Officers, National Worſhip of divine Inſtitution.

The ANSWER.

A National Profeſſion of Chriſtianity is no Jewiſh Pædagogy. It is *oppoſitum, in appoſito.* Chriſts freeing us, relates to the Ceremonial, or the Moral Law. (The Judaical Law being left indifferent to be renounced, or retained) The Ceremonial or Moſaical Law is annulled (only the equity of it excepted) The Synagogue is deceaſed *mortua & mortifera* (St. *Auſtin* expreſſeth it) dead and deadly under the Goſpel.

The Moral Law is cancelled for the ſting, the curſe, not the rigor, the obſervance. It is ſtill a Pilot to ſteer, though no abſolute Judge to ſentence.

But this double ſpecified Liberty acquits nor Perſon, nor Nation from ſubmiſſion to the yoke of our Redeemer, from being viſibly, profeſſionally Chriſtians.

To your next Charge, I anſwer briefly and ſummarily. The Officers

and Worſhip aſſerted in the Church of *England* (and conſequently in the Nation) are for the grounds and eſſentials of Divine Inſtitution. (when you attempt to diſprove I ſhall be ready to ratifie what I aſſert) Theſe Eſſentials are general for all, the additionals only ars humane, and perhaps peculiar to the Church of *England*: Which additionals are accidental, ritual Ceremonial. In theſe Ceremonials the Apoſtles forecited Precepts are piouſly obſerved, and St. *Auſtins* caveats judiciouſly not neglected; For number not many (no Judaical exceſs) for ſignification moſt weighty (uſeful for edifying as well as beautifying) for obſervation moſt eaſie (that they be not plummets to depreſs, but wings to raiſe our affections in Divine Ordinances.)

1 Cor. 14. 26, 40.

The LETTER.

Our birth in the Nation makes us Members of the Church.

The ANSWER.

We avouch not the Climate, but the Parentage,

Parentage, the deſcent, a Chriſtian extraction in any Nation gives right to the Covenant, and ſeals of the Covenant: this renders Infants capable of being baptized, and therein imitate Church Members.

In Babes that are the iſſue of profeſt Believers, we acknowledge a federal, though not a perſonal, actual holineſs. They have ſeminal claim, a radical right of admiſſion into the viſible Church. It is Gods promiſe to *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful. *I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thy ſeed after thee.* Gen. 17. 7.

Wherein though the inviſible graces are aſſured to inward Believers, yet the viſible ſigns appertain to outward Profeſſors, the Sons, the Heirs apparent of *Abraham*. The legal Seal of the Covenant (Circumciſion) being exchanged to the Evangelical (Baptiſm) St. *Peter* builds the Jews hereditary Title, and intereſt as to Baptiſmal reception into the Church, upon this foundation. *The promiſe is made to you and your children.* Acts 2. 39.

The LETTER.

I confeſs I have read ſome Hiſtorians and Writers, both Ancient and Modern, touching the firſt conſtituting, and appearing of a Church and Goſpel in England, Annis 180, *and* 598, *but not to ſatisfaction.*

The ANSWER.

That in the year 598, was not the firſt converſion in this Climate, though magnified by the Romaniſts to heighten the *Saxon* obligation to *Rome*, becauſe *Auſtin* the Monk was employed by Pope *Gregory* the firſt. Nor yet was the complexion of Chriſtianity firſt diſcernable in the year 180, though the Jeſuits own the dawning of the Goſpel in the Britiſh Climate about that time, for to vindicate the dependance of the Britiſh Church upon the Roman, becauſe of King *Lucius* baptized by a delegate from *Eleutherius*.

Not to carp at your Chronology, though I find not that punctual year of 189, fixed by any Chronologer. (*Polanus*

lanus mentions 188, *Baron.* 183. *Polyd. Virg.* 182. *Balæus* 179. *Mar. Scotus* 177. *Forſedia* 169, &c.) However not to inſiſt on, or debate that nicity. The firſt Evangelical apparence was of an elder date than the time ſpecified in your Letter (the year 180.) by above an entire Century of years. *Gildas* an ancient renowned Hiſtorian (as cited by *Balæus* Cent. 1.) doth teſtifie the Morning Beams of Chriſtianity, to have been darted among the Britains. Hence the Britiſh Church hath been titled *Primogenita Eccleſia* (the firſt born Church) Of all the Provinces, this is famed by *Sabbellicus*, for the firſt celebrating of Chriſtianity. Credible Teſtimonies of *Capgravius*, *Scropus*, *Polyd. Virgil.* do fix on the year 63, for the converſion of the Britiſh Nation. From which *Epocha* the Britiſh preſerved the luſtre of an uncorrupted purity, till o'ercaſt with the tempeſt of the *Dioclefian* perſecution, as *Beda* acknowledgeth.

Gildas monachus teſtatur Britannos ab initio orti Evangelii Chriſtianam accepiſſe religionem, Bal. in Cent. 1. de Joſ. Arimath.

Britannia omnium provinciarum primi publiciter Chriſti nomen recepit, Sabbell. Enn. 7. l. 7.

Suſceptam fidem Britanni uſq; ad tempora Dioclefiani principis inviolatam, integramque quieta pace ſervabant. Beda Eccl. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 4.

But during this time, you will not allow a conſtituted Church: As if *Tertullians* flouriſh of the Britiſh being ſubdued to Chriſt, not to *Cæſar*, the one having

Britannorum inacceſſa Romanis loca Chriſto ſubdita. Tertul. adv. Judeos.

having erected a Throne, where the other durſt not ſet his foot (*Territa quæſitis oſtendit terga Britannis*) had been but an empty flouriſh, a windy vaunt.

Your diſſatisfaction being expreſſed without your reaſon to confirm it, I need not dilate to confute it.

The LETTER.

Conserning the ſecond Query, leſt I tyre you with theſe at preſent very diſcompoſed things; I humbly offer. Whether the Church of England, *and that there is a divine ſeparation, or a ſeparation warranted in the word,* Jer. 15. 19. Ezek. 22. 26. Matth. 7. 6. Matth. 18. 19. Acts 19. 9. Rev. 4. 2 Cor. 6. 17.

The ANSWER.

My Replies will much more need an Apology than your Query, wherein I have been partly neceſſitated to be copious for diſcuſſion, for illuſtration, by examining thoſe Texts you quote only, unfolding what you enwrap, becauſe I would not like *Heraclitus* be entitled σκότεινος, a dark obſcure Sophiſter

Sophiſter. One Scripture genuine quotation, if pertinently, demonſtratively preſſed ſhall convince and captivate me, whereas a thouſand, if looſely and inconſiderately applied, will not ſtartle me from my ſtation.

There is I confeſs a Divine Separation, not in your notion, you raiſe ſeparation to Heaven (as *Hortenſius* did Eloquence in *Tullies* Cenſure) to advance your ſelf with it.

I ſhall encounter with your Texts in the rank you muſter them.

The firſt is *Jer.* 15.19.

If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou ſhalt be as my mouth, let them return to thee, but return not thou to them.

This is a Doctrinal, not a perſonal ſeparation. It is Gods ſpecial conſolation to the Prophet *Jeremy*. If by thy Inſtructions, thy Sermons, thou ſhalt ſeparate or diſtinguſh betwixt the ſacred or the wicked, *&c.* So *Jerom* expounds it.

Si Sermonibus ſegregaveris Hieron. in Hier. 15.19.

If by Prophecying thou diſcerneſt what is good, from what is evil, *&c.* ſo *Junius* and *Tremelius* gloſs it.

Si prophetando diſcernis quicquid bonum à malo, & ſine acceptione perſonarum verum dices & falſum abdicas, tanquam ſi ego ipſe loquerer, &c. Jun. & Tremel. in Jer. 15.19.

Or

Si separaveris pretiosum à vili i.e. si animas Christi sanguine pretioso redemptas à vilitate peccati per tuam doctrinam, &c. Lyra in Hier. 15.19.

Or as others comment, If thou converteſt thoſe ſouls that are redeemed by the precious Blood of Chriſt, from vile, vitious courſes, then thou ſhalt be as my mouth, thou ſhalt diſcharge the part of Gods Embaſſador (*In voce Hominis tuba Dei*, as St. *Auſtin* expreſſeth it) *In the voice of man there will be the trumpet of God.* Let them return to thee, but return not thou to them; let them be reclaimed, be not thou depraved.

The ſenſe and ſcope of this Text is an alien to the Queſtion, it is far ſeparated from your ſeparation.

Your ſecond Quotation is at as great a diſtance, and needs no other ſolution than the former.

Ezek. 22.26.

Her prieſts have violated, and have prophaned my holy things, they have put no difference between the holy and prophane, neither have ſhewed difference between the unclean and the clean.

The Geneva Fr. notes refer us to Levit. 11.47. Indifferenter immolantes animalia immunda & munda, Lyra. in Ezek. 22.26.

Some Expoſitors underſtand this of Ceremonial oblations (the Moſaical differences not obſerved betwixt clean and unclean beaſts and ſacrifices) If this charge concerns Moral Actions; God hereby

hereby reproves the Prieſts, becauſe the Prieſts reproved not the people for their Tranſgreſſions.

Non docuerunt plebem quæ eſſet differentia puri & immundi, Vatabl. in Ezek. 22. 26.

The Prieſts were indeed ordained, authoriſed by God, Inſtructors of the people, and ordinary Judges in theſe caſes, who yet never ſentenced, nor reprehended the holy for mingling with the prophane in a divine Service or Sacrifice.

1. I grant a Miniſterial or Prophetical Separation by declaring Gods Commandments, by denouncing his Judgments.

The neglect of this is taxed by *Jeremy* and *Ezekiel* in your inſtances.

2. I allow a Profeſſional Separation, which may be branch'd to devotion, compunction, reprehenſion, by praying againſt wickedneſs, by mourning for it, by rebuking it.

This was the frequent practice of the Prophets and the Apoſtles.

3. I yield an Eccleſiaſtical or Juridical Separation, which is Excommunication, to be of Divine Impreſſion.

But your local ſeparation from thoſe Chriſtian Brethren you account unholy in thoſe Ordinances you acknowledge

ledge holy discovers no stamp of the Sacred Spirit, no warrant out of those Prophets you cite, and therefore cannot pass for νόμισμα θεῦ, (in St. *Ignatius* words) for Gods current uncontrolled Coin, having not the true image, superscription of the Sanctuary.

Your two next Quotations, *Matth.* 7. 6. *Matth.* 18.17 are repeated and reinforced within a few lines where they shall be discussed.

The 5*th.* Quotation is *Acts* 19.9.

But when divers were hardned, and believed not, but spake evil of the way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the School of one Tyrannus.

After three Months ineffectual trial, not a private ordinary person, but an Apostle (who had an immediate vocation and commission an infallible inspiration, an universal jurisdiction) quitted, obdurate, obstinate Jews, who undermined the foundation, who blasted the superstruction of Christian Religion: who were branded for notorious, scandalous, blasphemy, infidelity, impenitency. In this exigency he withdrew the

Κακολογοῦντες τὴν ὁδὸν, Act. 19.9.

the Disciples from a Synagogue to the School of *Tyrannus* (a sort of Seminary of Piety and Literature, according to *Maimonides*) A private collegiate Academy for the Prophets and the Prophets Sons, what will you hence infer?

Therefore you ought to separate from profest Christian Believers for their practical defailances.

The proof fits the conclusion as well as *Goliahs* Armour did *Davids* body; or *Elisha*'s demensions stretch'd upon the the Child.

The next Citation is *Rev.*18.4.

Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues.

I shall not examine the literal restriction (as a prediction of *Alaricus* Siege, wherein the Emperor *Honorius* with others escaped from *Rome* to *Ravenna*) Take this Testimony in the most advantageous Latitude, yet there is to be distinguish'd a Negative Separation of not approving, and a positive of deserting. There may be an egress out of *Babylon*, not by the paces of the body, but the affections of the soul

*Dr. Hammond in his Annot. on Rev.*18.4.

ſouls. It is emphatically expreſſed (that ye be not partakers of her ſins) of her ſins, not of her virtues; of her ſinners, not with her ſinners, eſpecially in thoſe exerciſes, wherein they are not ſinners.

I need not perplex my ſelf to enervate the force of your Argument. This will not prop your ſeparation, till you prove the Church of *England* to be *Babylon*, at leaſt in a figurative acception to be ranked, parallel'd with it for infidelity, for idolatry. Till then your ſuppoſition is an imputation. It is *Ariſtotles Maxime, One abſurdity being granted, a thouſand may be inferred.*

Take heed leſt you deſert *Bethel* for *Babel*, *Jeruſalem* for *Samaria*, leſt like *Ixion* you embrace a Cloud for *Juno*, leſt you exchange a beautified paradiſe for a *Tohu bohu*, a diſordered Chaos; an uniform exquiſite Garden for an unnurtured confuſed Wilderneſs, leſt your Flowers be not Roſes but Nettles, your Plants not Vines but Briars.

The laſt Citation is of the ſame grain, 2 *Cor.* 6. 17. *Wherefore come out from*

from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.

This as the former Testimony is a Transcript of *Isaiah* 52. 11. *Depart, depart ye; go out from them, and touch no unclean thing: go out of the midst of her, be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.*

This charge at the first blush is confined to the Priests and Levites. The Jewish Rabbines expound it as a Precept not to wave the opportunity of *Cyrus* consent for the Jews returning from *Babylon* to *Jerusalem*.

Κέλευσμα ad Judæos ut quamprimum exeant à Babylone quòd multi se miscuerant Babyloniis. Nihil idolatricum assumite: ita præcones Evangelii dicunt discedite, quod fit dupliciter. Primò cum discedimus à Babyl. spir. à Papismo. Secundo, cum nos segregamus ab impuris confessione, conversione. Scull. in Is. 62. 11.

The Fathers of the Church enlarge this Precept to a Prophesie (a mixture of both) for the Christians retiring from *Jerusalem* to *Pella*, before the destruction of it (which is testified by *Eusebius* to have been accomplish'd) The further application of it extends not to your separation. Take the English Marginal Annotations. He warns the faithful, not to pollute themselves with

Euseb. in Eccles. Hist. l. 3. c. 4.

the superstitions of the Babylonians.

Eripite vos resipiscentia è tantis malis in quibus adhuc versati estis, & sanctificationi vestræ incumbite, Jun. & Trem. in Is. 52. 11.

Junius and *Tremelius* interpret the departure repentance, the separation sanctification.

What our English Translation renders, *Be ye clean.* The *Septuagint*, Ἀφορίσθητε, *Be ye separated*, *Estius* observes the separation prescribed to be for opinion and affection.

Adonnez vous à sainteté. Voyez sus, vers. 1. The Gen. Fr. notes on Es. 53. 11. and on the first referred to *seras entierement sanctifiée & repurgée de tous scandales.*

The *Geneva* Divines run the same descant, that this separation ought to be purifying, sanctifying.

Quod Apostolus dicit intelligendum de separatione spirituali. Aq. in 2 Ep. ad Cor. 6. 17.

The Apostle doth no otherwise press it to the *Corinthians*, for a mental not a local discession; spiritual (as *Aquinas* distinguisheth) not corporal.

Judæi cum obviam venirent Gentili aut Samaritano dicebant ne attingas me. Drus. in l. 6. Præc.

Not to touch an unclean thing, is not like the Jews shy distance from the Gentiles & the Samaritans; who upon a sudden approach startled and admonish'd, *touch me not*: but not to touch is to disgust, to reprehend, not to gloze, not to palliate offences.

Immundum non tangit qui ad peccatum nulli consentit. Aug. in l. 3. contra Parm. *Displicere est non tangere. Lyra in 2 Cor. 6. 17.*

I pray obſerve the object of the ſeparation (expreſſed by the Apoſtle, in that ſixth Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, cited by you.) It is the Infidel in *verſe* 15, Darkneſs in *verſe* 14. for the ſpirits of darkneſs; idols in *verſe* 16. for idolaters, according to *Theophylacts* Rule of Expoſition, πράγματα ἀντὶ προσώπων, (things for perſons) Becauſe the Chriſtian *Corinthians* were required to ſeparate from the damned Fiends, from branded Idolaters, Pagan Infidels, in their unrighteous, idolatrous Sacrifices and Feaſts. Will you hence induce a juſtification of your ſeparation, from Profeſſors in Chriſtian Sacramental Actions: It is a very lame conſequence.

Laſtly, it is obſervable what kind of mixture is taxed, prohibited in the Apoſtles perſwaſive, invective (in the ſixth Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*) It is a yoking which imports binding and linking (*jugum à jungendo*) an unequal yoking of Piety with Infidelity, of Chriſtianity with Paganiſm, like that of the *Tuſcan* Tyrant (of the living with the dead) It is not only expreſſed a participation or

Fellowſhip, not only a Communion, or rather Communication κοινωνία, in *verſe* 14. but συμφώνησις not convention, according to the vulgar Latin, but conſent, not an Aſſembly, but an Harmony in *verſe* 15. like ſeveral Muſical Inſtruments tuned to an exact melody (ſaith *Aretius*) nay, entituled συγκατάθεσις; not barely an agreement, not meerly ὁμοίωσις; an aſſimilation, a reſemblance (as the old Scholiaſt illuſtrates it) but it denotes an entire confederacy in infidelity.

Oecumen. in 2 Cor. 6. 16.

This variety of Eloquence is the Apoſtles pregnant Rhetorick to preſent an abſolute correſpendence heightned to complacence of Society. This we allow not with profeſt Believers, whoſe lives are notoriouſly vitious, ſcandalous.

But this Apoſtolical ſeverity reflects upon Pagan, not Chriſtian Profeſſors. I have ſifted this Teſtimony, the rather becauſe as it hath been managed, it hath been a ſpecious ſnare to men of honeſt upright hearts, though not of diſcerning, piercing intellectuals.

The

The LETTER.

Who thoſe are, and what the things are, we muſt ſeparate from. I ſpeak here of ſeparation from men profeſſing, not heathens. The perſons are Brethren, the things are Offences, ſcandals. The unclean were to be ſeparated of old, Levit. 10.9,10. 2 Chron. 23. 19. Matth. 18. 16,17. *Wicked perſons are called dogs,* Matth.7.6. *Compare this with* 2 Pet.2. 20.22. *They are apoſtatized, or degenerated perſons* 1 Cor.5.7, 13. 2 Theſſ.3. 6.14. 2 Tim.3.5. *They are ſuch as have a Profeſſion and no more.*

The ANSWER.

Your proofs hitherto have extended only to Pagans and Jews, for the perſons to be ſeparated from, whom you cannot gild with the title of Profeſſors and Brethren; the things, or motives to be ſeparated for, you ſtate to be Offences or ſcandals. But all ſcandals are not ſufficient inducements of ſeparation, not paſſive ſcandals (taken) but active ſcandals (given) nay, not

active ſcandals, till they are legally convicted, doomed.

Your firſt refuge is to the Jewiſh Sanctuary; But the Sanctuary being abrogated, your argument is diſſolv'd.

The two firſt Citations are of the ſame Judaical batch, *Lev.* 10. 9, 10. *Do not drink wine nor ſtrong drink, thou nor thy ſons with thee, when you go into the tabernacle of the congregation, leſt you die; it ſhall be a ſtatute for ever through your generations.*

And that you put difference betwixt the holy and the unholy, and between the unclean and clean.

2 Chron. 23. 19. *And he ſet the porters at the gates of the houſe of the Lord, that none which was unclean in any thing ſhould enter in.*

The occaſion of the Prohibition urged out of *Levit.* 10. is apprehended to be *Nadab* and *Abihus* ſtrange fire. It ſeems they were diſtempered when they ſacrificed, and were not qualified to diſtinguiſh betwixt clean and unclean. For the Prieſts were obliged νομοθετῆσαι, to examine the Sacrifices, which could not well be effected, when

when they were debauched. *Quid hæc ad Rhombum?*

The Historical Narrative pleaded (2 *Chron.* 23.) was *Jehojadah* the old high Priest, who set the Porters. This may serve as a flourish for Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction for Excommunication by Authority, not as the least varnish for separation of themselves of any under Authority.

To take a fuller survey of this double Testimony.

The first (of *Levit.*) is expounded of holy and prophane days, of clean and unclean Beasts and Sacrifices.

St. *Austin* is sceptical, hovering in suspence, whether to understand the Persons or Oblations, the Officers or the Offerings.

Grant the persons to be unclean, according to the second Testimony (out of the *Chronicles*) yet this was only a Mosaical Ceremonial pollution for the Jew, which will not conclude a Moral, Evangelical pollution for the Christian to be separated from.

Origen, who is titled the Allegorizing Father, is very shy, and useth a solemn Apology, for that Allegorical

plication of this legal pollution.

Perhaps you will object that these outward defilements were Types of Inward, Moral, Habitual: However, these are but shadows of proofs, empty conjectural resemblances, not solid substantial arguments.

But I shall gratifie you so far, as to examine the typical force of your Testimonies.

Mr. Weemes in his Christian Synagogue.

Three sorts of Judaical, eminent pollutions there were; by the Dead, by Issue, by Leprosie; and three different Separations, or Purgations chalked out. Out of the Camp of God, of the Priests, of *Israel*. These were by Jewish Doctors reputed Types of their gradual Excommunications; *Nidui*, *Caerem*, *Samatha* (in the Syriack *Maran-atha*) Figures of the ὑποπίπτοντες, Ἀκροώμενοι, προσκλαίοντες, in the Greek Church; of the *Abstenti*, *Excommunicati*, *Anathematizati*, in the Western Church.

This typical force being displayed in its brightest colours, its fullest dimensions, will countenance a Separation after Excommunication, not before it.

Your next Quotation is *Matth.* 18.

16.

16. 17. *But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word may be eſtabliſh'd.*

And if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church. But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.

This is μῆλον ἔριδος, *The apple of debate*, the *Helena* contended for, eſpouſed by each party.

I conceive with ſubmiſſion to more learned mature Judgements, that though this Teſtimony like a well drawn Picture, may ſeem to fix an Aſpect on every Spectator (that looks on it) yet it appears deſign'd for a ſpecial direction in point of particular, perſonal offences betwixt the Jews: This ſort of ſcandal being diſcernible, like a vein through the whole body of the Chapter. *If thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee*, in *verſe* 15. *How oft ſhall my brother ſin againſt me*, in *verſe* 21.

Theſe Queries ſound particular offences betwixt the Jews, becauſe of the laſt reſult. *Let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.* An expreſſion that

that suits with no other Nation but the Jew; who being then left destitute of redress in case of injury by any that waved the Jewish, Mosaical, for the *Cæsarean*, Roman Government and Tribunal, our Saviour chalks out a gradual vindicative progress. First, a brotherly solitary admonition (tell him his fault betwixt him and thee alone.) Secondly, a friendly private reprehension, a glympse of neighbourly arbitration (then take with thee one or two more.) Thirdly, a publick judiciary convention (tell it to the Church, τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, to the Assembly, 'tis so interpreted, *Act.* 19. 32, 39. 41.) This was the Jewish Sanedrim, in the opinion of *Calvin* and *Beza*. Lastly, if he be refractory to the Authority of the Sanedrim, then take liberty of *Cæsars* reparation, of being righted by the Roman jurisdiction (*Let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.*)

Calvin. in Harmon.
Evangelista pro seniorum collegio Ἐκκλησίαν *dixit Beza in Annot. in Matt.* 18.

The main exception against this Comment will be, that this undermines the foundation of Church Discipline, whereas this is elsewhere abundantly supported.

The next words of binding and loosing

loosing, do not absolutely control this sense; for as there may be a binding of obduration by God, of Excommunication by the Church, so of reprehension by a particular person, whose reproof binds, fetters in guilt, when it reclaims not, as also it untwists the cords, loosens the manacles, when it effectually reforms.

I dare not press with confidence any Exposition that is eccentrical to the Orb of the Church, that hath the least apparence of novelty, of singularity; I only tender this sense of the Text alledged as probable, without a literal wrench, which if admitted renders the Testimony an impertinency as to your drift.

But suppose the words in the most indulgent acception to your advantage. Because a heinous, notorious offender, after reiterated fruitless reproofs, having disregarded the Charity of a Brother, and the Authority of his Mother the Church, is to be proceeded against, or reputed, rejected *as a heathen and a publican*, as an alien to Religion; will you hence argue that without these Methods of varied addresses, without

admonition

admonition ratified with conviction; you a private perſon may ſeparate from the Church, whereof you were a Member, a Son, and in effect explode the Church it ſelf, as if it were *a heathen and a publican.*

There is no Engine of Logick or Divinity will conclude it. This Text ſtands at emmity with your opinion. For if a man treſpaſſing were not to be accounted as *Ethnicus*, or *Publicanus*, till there preceded a *Dic Eccleſiæ*; not to be branded or deſerted, till that Authority be diſeſteemed; then 'tis unqueſtionable none can ſeparate and judge a Chriſtian to be a Heathen, any man to be a Publican at his own pleaſure. Authority of the Church muſt be appealed to, and diſobeyed, or elſe no ſeparation can be confirmed by this Teſtimony.

You charge afreſh, wicked perſons are called dogs, *Matth.7.6.* The title of a dog is a branding obloquy, a name of reproach in all Languages (as Criticks obſerve) Though the deſcription, the compariſon of the holy Ghoſt is not to be ſcrupled at, yet your application may (as to Parochial Members)

bers) They may be ſheep in Gods eſtimate, who are dogs in yours. Theſe dogs may be permitted to pick up the crumbs under the Table.

Thus the Turks in a zeal of Mahumetaniſm debar Chriſtians from their Moſchos, reviling them to be dogs, becauſe they do not ordinarily uſe Bathes.

Moryſon in his Travels.

The Donatiſts, who deemed and termed the Orthodox Chriſtians in the Primitive Church dogs, in a haughty contempt and contumely, flung the Sacred Elements of the Euchariſt to dogs (in a literal ſenſe) which dogs enraged flew upon the Donatiſts, and tore them in pieces, for to revenge ſo horrid an impiety and indignity. To return to your Argument.

Juſſerunt Euchariſtiam canibus fundi; non ſine ſigno divini judicii: nam iidem canes accenſi rabie ipſos dominos ſuos quaſi latrones ſanctiſ corporis reos dente vindice tanquam ignotos & inimicos laniaverunt, Optat. l. 2.

The Text you urge, forbids that which is holy to be given to dogs. That which is holy is there unvailed by the beſt Commentators to be the Evangelical Doctrine: This debars Sermons (as well as Sacraments) to Parochial Members, which you allow to thoſe whom you account dogs. St. *Chryſoſtom* and *Euthymius* underſtood theſe dogs to be Infidels. In this Notion it

is

Matth. 15. 16. *is not fit to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to dogs*, who will not regard, but revile it.

Acts 13. 46. St. *Paul* and *Barnabas* exasperated by this snarling reception deserted the Jews, and applied themselves to the Gentiles.

You reinforce your assault, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 22. to fix the aspersion of dogs on Parochial Members, being apostatized, degenerated persons. Without further discussing of the Texts, I confess as Infidels are compared to dogs for barking, and tearing; so are Apostates for a recidivation of trangression, like dogs licking up what they disgorge. But since a reiterated offence doth plead no absolute incapacity of repentance (that was the condemned Novatian disconsolate Heresie.) A lapsed, relapsed sinner, if allowed to be a penitent, is not restrained, but in capacity to be a communicant.

Matth. 18. 22. *Vicibus innumerabiliter innumerabilibus, Aug.* Our blessed Saviour prescribes remission to St. *Peter seventy times seven times*. *Origen* understood it literally, but the rest of the Fathers expound it figuratively: A definite number for an indefinite, for an infinite. This is

is the duty of an earthly Brother, which is much exceeded by the tranſcendent mercy of an Heavenly Father.

His Candor is the perfect Pattern, ours the imperfect Copy. Be you merciful as your Father is merciful. As for ſimilitude, though not for equality, As no leſs in an extenſive than intenſive conſideration; no leſs for frequency than ſincerity.

Your next Citation, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. *(Purge out therefore the old leaven)* verſe 13. *Put away from among you the wicked perſon, prima facie,* at the firſt bluſh hath the apparence of an Eccleſiaſtical Cenſure, and is generally ſo interpreted by Commentators; that the doom which was determined, pronounced by the Apoſtles, ſhould be executed by the *Corinthians*. This proves that an inceſtuous perſon and ſuch ſcandalous offenders are to be excommunicated, and ſeparated from, being excommunicated, but not before. If Separation be precedent, Excommunication needs not be conſequent. It were a ſuperfluity of ſeverity.

——*Stat magni nominis umbra.*

I pray obſerve that the inceſtuous perſon was a member of the particular Church of *Corinth*, till he was excommunicated, otherwiſe he could not be ejected out of it: As *Heinſius* rationally obſerves. For to be excluded, undeniably preſuppoſeth to be intereſted. The conſequence is the ſame, for every heinous ſinner, who is a profeſt Believer till ſentence to be excommunicated.

Qui niſi in Eccleſia fuiſſet tolli ex ea non poterat. Heinſ. in 1 Ep. ad Cor. 5.

Your double ſucceeding Teſtimony, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 6. (*That you withdraw your ſelves from every brother that walketh diſorderly*) verſe 14. (*Note that man, and have no company with him*) amounts to the ſame ſingle force of Excommunication, if moſt Commentators rightly underſtand it, Here note (ſaith *Aquinas*) the ſentence is inflicted for diſobedience. *Zanchy* raiſeth as a doctrinal obſervation, whom the Church ſhould excommunicate. Ἀτάκτος, A Military Metaphor for diſorder'd, diſbanded Soldiers. There is an Admonition precedent, *Warn them that are unruly.*

1 *Theſſ.* 5. 14.

A

A ſecond Admonition, *We command and exhort you by the Lord Jeſus.* 2 Theſſ. 3. 12. *Aquinas* collects conviction, and manifeſtation from the charge. 'Tis no ordinary mark, not Σημήνατε, but Σημειῶσθε, ſet, as it were, a mark on the forehead. It is a note of Excommunication, ſaith *Beza*.

Some few Expoſitors underſtand a Prohibition of familiar converſation, μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι, not to be mingled, incorporated.

It denotes the entire conjunction of Wedlock or Friendſhip, *Junius* and *Tremelius* link both Expoſitions. The familiarity of the excommunicated is to be eſchewed. *Familiaritas cum Excommunicatis eſt vitanda, Jun. & Trem.*

Your laſt Citation, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. *Having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof; from ſuch turn away*: Whence you collect, they are ſuch then as have but a profeſſion, and no more.

This is indeed the Character of a Hypocrite, who is like a Swan, that hath white Feathers, but a black Skin. The Hypocrite muſt be unmask'd (as the Swan unfeather'd) he muſt be convicted, before ſeparated from. Till then the ſemblance of innocence (the form of godlineſs) ranks him in the

visible Church. *Lyra* glosseth this formal Piety to be a sacramental society of pure and impure profest Christians. I need not add more weight to this Position, since your passages of your Letter admit the Hypocrite.

Habentes speciem quia eadem Sacramenta cum piis, Lyra in 2 Ep. ad Tim. 1. 3, 5.

Take the close of your Quotation, *(From such turn away)* in its largest capacity, as relating to the black Catalogue in the former verses (2, 3, 4.) It is not παραιτοῦ, *avoid*, according to the Remists; but Ἀποστρέφου, *Turn away*; not affording the least countenance, or connivance. This denotes a high disgust, a resentment of their vitious courses, a distance for a defiance, an aversation for a detestation, not of the men, but of their corrupt manners.

Grant this to be applied to the persons, that acted the abominations *(from such turn away,* or according to the Syriack, *Remove such far from thee.)* This discards a private carnal conversing in the Chamber, not a publick spiritual communicating in the Church. That we receive not those into our houses, into our bosoms, that we entertain them not for our intimate

Friends

Friends, who proclaim themſelves to be Gods obdurate Enemies. In this ſence the Apoſtles caveat tends to prevent the inſenſible catching, infection of a peſtilent, ungratious converſation.

Uvaq; contactu livorem ducit ab uva.

This Caution may be byaſt with a further ſcope, more peculiarly reflecting upon *Timothy*; that he ſhould turn away from ſuch offenders of ſteeled faces, that being habitually depraved, obſtinately hardned, they ſhould not ineffectually be exhorted, argued with. The patient may be quitted, when the cure is deſpaired. *Junius* and *Tremelius* thus deſcant on the Caveat. *Eſtius* parallels it with the Apoſtolical Precept to *Titus* 3. 10, 11. *A man that is an heretick, after the firſt and ſecond admonition reject: Knowing that he that is ſuch is ſubverted and ſinneth, being condemned by himſelf.*

Non eſt quod ludetur opera Jun. & Tremel. in 2 Tim. 3. 5.

Hic locus ex alio interpretandus (Tit. 3.) neq; exiſtimaverim idcirco hoc præceptum dari Timotheo ne colloquiis inficeretur, ſed ob cauſam Tito communem. Eſtius.

The LETTER.

We cannot communicate with those whom we are commanded by God to separate from without sin.

But scandalous and offending brethren are such as we are commanded to separate from—1 Cor. 5. 11. *If not to keep company in the lesser, as ordinary commerce, & eating, much less may we in the greater.*

The ANSWER.

Distinguish betwixt Separation in Communion and Conversation, and there will evidently appear four Terms in your Argument, which will discover it not a Fallacy only in Divinity, but a Prodigie in Logick.

The Major Proposition is true only, as to separating in Communion: The Minor Proposition is true only, as to separating in Conversation.

To prevent Ambiguity, Amphibology. I shall crave leave to new mould your Syllogism.

We may not communicate with such, whom we are commanded by God to

to ſeparate from in Communion.

But from ſcandalous ſinners we are commanded by God to ſeparate from in Communion.

Therefore we may not communicate with ſcandalous ſinners.

I deny the Minor Propoſition. This you aſſay to confirm by the Apoſtles Prohibition, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. (*With ſuch a one no not to eat*) you hence fortifie your Argument.

If not to keep company in the leſſer, as ordinary commerce, and eating, much leſs may we in the greater.

I anſwer. The Topick Canon, from the Leſſer to the Greater, is a valid proof, when both are of the ſame Tribe (of the ſame ſtock and nature) when they are cloathed with the dreſs of the ſame circumſtances. But your inſtances are not. Take the illuſtration from *Calvin*. The one is arbitrary, it is in our power not to eat with a ſcandalous Brother. The other is neceſſary, to communicate with him (in

Reſpondeo in libertate noſtra & facultate poſitum eſſe, an familiariter verſemur cum ſceleratis? quo fit ut unicuiq; ab eo ſit abſtinendum. At non eſt ita in noſtro arbitrio poſitum, an cœnam recipiamus necne. Itaq; diverſa eſt ratio. Notemus ergo, ſi Eccleſia hominem indignum ferat & toleret, probè facturos eos qui talem noverint, ſi ab ejus conſuetudine abſtineant, idq; quoad poterit facere debere, modo ne ſchiſma ullum, aut ſeparationem in Eccleſiæ communione inducat. Calv. in inſtruct. adv. Anabap.

the Lords Supper) He can till excommunicated, plead an interest in the Lords Table, (which is *secunda post naufragium tabula*, the second plank after Shipwrack) He can plead no interest in yours. If the Church (saith *Calvin*) tolerate an unworthy person; it is commendable to be shy of his society, so far as may consist with a mans duty; so that hereby no Schism, no Separation as to Church Communion be introduced.

Privatus convictus corrumpit mores conversantium non perinde communis Sacramentorum usus. Aret. in 1 Ep. ad Thess. 3.14.

Aretius manifests the fallacious abuse of your Topick Maxime by this reason. Private familiarity of repast with the wicked may taint in point of conversation, at least tempt, molest, but not so for the publick Piety of the Sacrament. In the one the holy encourage the impiety of the prophane: in the other the prophane countenance the piety of the holy. Their access, if impenitent needs not scare, nor divert your approach if penitent, (a foil to set off your lustre of Religion) your joynt Prayers and Graces may be helps to purge them; their defect and blemishes cannot annoy and soil you in the Sacramental Devotion.

Like

Like a Bee you may ſuck Honey out of that Herb, out of which others like Spiders extract Poyſon. As the fragrancy of that Oyntment deadens the Fly, which enlivens the Dove. The Principle, *Quicquid recipitur recipitur ad modum recipientis*, is no leſs appliable to a Sacrament than a Sermon: Both admit different repugnant Operations, according to the capacities of Auditors, and Receivers. As a reverent Auditor is not leſs edified, becauſe of irreverent Auditors in the ſame Church, ſo a faithful Communicant is not leſs ſanctified, becauſe an unfaithful diſſolute Brother, partakes of the ſame Table.

Remember the Apoſtles Caution, wherein (in the judgement of Expoſitors) he pricks the bladder of Phariſaical cenſure, *Let every man prove his own work, and then ſhall he have cauſe of rejoycing in himſelf alone, and not in another.* It is εἰς τὸν ἕτερον, not againſt another, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*, to tax, to condemn him. The Apoſtle enforceth this caution with a prediction, which may unplume any ſpiritual Arrogance, and turn the edge of any cenſorious Gal. 6. 4, 5.

rigor. For every man ſhall bear his own burden.

This perſonal clog of guilt hath weight and terror enough to cauſe you and me to ſigh and tremble for our ſelves. Alas, there needs no panick affrightment of being loaded and polluted with the corruptions of others, in uncorrupt actions, unleſs ſuch only as are committed to our charge, whoſe vitious courſes may reflect ſtains, if promoted by our neglects, by our defaults.

The LETTER.

It is called a Communion, 1 Cor. 10, 16, 21, 22. *I ſuppoſe meant a Communion of Saints, as far as our charity guided by the word may diſcern, but to ſay, That a company of ignorant Drunkards, Swearers, Sabbath breakers are Saints, is contrary to the word of God,* 1 Cor. 6. 9. 1 Joh. 1. 6, 9. Matth 7. 8. *Let us take heed of it,* Eſa. 5. 20. Prov. 17. 15. *They profeſs Chriſt,* 1 Cor. 6. 15. 17. *Therefore ſuch make not the Communion: A mixt Communion is not for Chriſt. His Members muſt be homogeneal, or elſe*

elſe a monſter, 2 Cor. 6. 14.

The ANSWER.

To prove a Communion of Saints in the Euchariſt you cite, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. *(The cup of bleſſing, which we bleſs, is it not the Communion of the blood of Chriſt, the bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Chriſt)* This relates to the matter of the Communion, not to the quality of the Communicant.

You add *(verſ.* 20, 21. *But I ſay that the things which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to devils, and not to God, I would not that you ſhould have fellowſhip with devils.)* The Apoſtle here brands the oblations of depraved Gentiles to damned Spirits, and forbids thoſe that communicate in a Chriſtian Pious Sacrament to partake of a Pagan Idolatrous Feaſt, This is remote eccentrical to our queſtion. I hope your judgement as well as your charity better guided than to rank thoſe you ſeparate from with Heathens, Idolaters, or to repute their ſacrifice of thankſgiving to God, to be an offering to Satan.

You

You aggravate it as a Solœciſm in Religion, to ſay, that a company of ignorant Drunkards, Swearers, Sabbath breakers are Saints. Is this your beſt Character to deſcypher a Parochial, Eccleſiaſtical Aſſembly. The ſharpeſt invectives are the ſlighteſt proofs. It was but a frothy confutation of a fiery Spirit in *Lucian*——κολάκων. Thou curſed wretch. We may in theſe, ſaith St. *Auſtin* to *Petilianus*, a Donatiſt, be alike copious, but we will not be alike vain.

In his poſſumus eſſe pariter copioſi ſed nolumus eſſe pariter vani. Aug. adv. Petil.

As if like thoſe of *China* you fancied your ſelves only to have two eyes, (of Reaſon and of Religion) and the reſt of the World but one, your firſt brand is Ignorant. I pray ſet down what proportion of knowledge is preciſely requiſite in a Communicant, and how far that phraſe of diſcerning of the Lords Body is neceſſarily to be extended. After conſtant Catechiſms and Sermons in Parochial Churches, mens ignorance is not ſo great in not knowing what to practice, as their prophaneneſs in not practiſing what they know. Where Catechiſms and Sermons are not frequent, where the Expedients

Expedients of saving knowledge are not tendred, your Charity may determine this ignorance of a pure negation, not of a depraved disposition; an involuntary necessitated, not a voluntary affected ignorance.

However you deem, there is a gracious high Priest, after the order of *Melchisedeck*, who can have compassion on the ignorant, *Heb* 5. 2. It is μετριοπαθεῖν, which according to *Theophylact* imports commensuration, compassion, condescention, condonation (to match, to melt, to bend, to stoop, (so the Syriack) to pardon) This compassion is not confined to the ignorant, but extended to the Delinquent. (*And on them that are out of the way*) 'Tis πλανωμένοις, such as swerve deviate from the narrow Path of integrity; such as are seduced by the wiles, the impostures of Satan. This notion comprehends your description of the black rabble, (Swearers, Drunkards, *&c.*) especially if the transgressions be not predominant, if the transgressors be not impenitent. They may be titled Saints professional, though not actual, for their Tenets, though not for their Lives

Μετριοπαθῶν φησὶ συμμετρῶν, συμπαθῶν, συγκαταβαίνων ἢ συγχωρῶν, Theophyl.

Lives; as to the outward Adminiſtration of the General Covenant of Grace, though not as to the inward ſpecial Participation.

Yet in the ſtricteſt conſideration they are to be enrolled Saints, till they are convicted to be miſcreants: Till then, though they are not ſuch really in themſelves, yet they are judicially in the Eye of the Law, in the Cenſure of the Church. Not only by the Rule of Charity, but Equity, every man is preſumed, ſuppoſed to be good, till he be legally proved to be evil.

To twiſt together your objections of ignorance and prophaneneſs (drunkards, *&c.*) which you preſs as inconſiſtent with Saintſhip; I confeſs not reconcileable with practical, yet reconcileable with federal ſanctity to be intereſted in a viſible Church. The Iſraelites were charged for ignorance, worſe than brutiſh (*The ox knows his owner, the aſſe his maſters crib: But Iſrael hath not known, my people hath not underſtood*) So univerſally, ſignally corrupted for converſation, the whole Nation is decypher'd, branch'd out to be Princes of *Sodom*, and people of *Gomor-*

Iſ. 1. 3.
Iſ. 1. 10.

Gomorrah, and yet titled the Children of God in *verſ.* 2. *The vineyard of the Lord of hoſts* in *Iſ.* 5. 7. yet the fruits were not delitious, Oppreſſion in *verſ.* 7. Covetous in *verſ.* 8. Drunkenneſs in *verſ.* 11. 12. Security and Impenitency in *verſe* 12. Deliberate, obſtinate iniquity in *verſ.* 18, 20.

Though *Sodom* and *Samaria* were outvied in guilt by *Iſrael*, yet were they a people relating to God by Covenant, though forfeited by their defailance, diſobedience; yet by Gods indulgence, not deſerted, diſclaimed by himſelf (*I will remember my covenant made with thee, in the days of thy youth*) It is *Hoſeah's* black enditement, *No truth, no mercy, no knowledge of God in the land. By lying, and ſwearing, and killing, and ſtealing, and whoring blood toucheth blood,*) and yet it is appropriated, *My people* in the ſixth and twelfth *verſes* of that Chapter; Not ironically, but truly as (*Zanchy* expounds it,) in regard of an external adoption, of outward Symboles expreſſes of Religion; which ſerved as publick badges and cognizances to manifeſt the Jews Eccleſiaſtical viſible priviledges, not to be

Ezech. 16. 48, 51.

Hoſ. 4. 2, 3.

Nec tamen ironice appellavit eum ſuum populum, ſed verè quoad externam adoptionem.

a

a people uncovenanted, unchurched.

Suppoſe this Nation more depraved than *Sodom* and *Samaria*, yet is it but ballanc'd with *Iſrael*; and it is no greater Soloeciſm in Scripture Language to entitle this Nation to be Saints (for its Parochial Members) for the profeſſion of true Religion, than to entitle the Jews to be Gods people on the ſame account. They are like parallel lines proportionable, ſuitable to each other.

The people of *Iſrael* were ſanctified by a federal relation, were circumciſed; they owned Gods Oracles, but diſobeyed his Laws. The ſcene of Circumciſion being ſhifted to Baptiſm, our caſe holds reſemblance (as to a viſible Church) as face anſwers face in water.

I ſhall add by way of ſurpluſage, The Apoſtles themſelves were not abſolutely acquitted from ignorance or ſcandal; even in a remarkable conjuncture, notwithſtanding the celebrating of our Saviours laſt Supper, and the approaching of the laſt ſcene of our Saviours Tragedy, they were contentious, and ambitious, tainted with

with pride and variance. (*There arose a ſtrife among them, which ſhould be greateſt.*) Ignorant they were of the ſaving myſteries of Chriſts Paſſion, his Reſurrection; notwithſtanding the predictions of the Prophets, the Sermons of our Saviour, yet they underſtood the Scepter only, not the Croſs of Chriſt, the apprehenſion of a Temporal, not a Spirituall *Meſſiah* fluttered in their brains, yet were ſtill liſted, reputed Diſciples, Apoſtles. Nay, *Judas* himſelf, when he was declared, pointed out a Traitor (being not excommunicated) was not debarred the name or the ſeal of a Diſciple (the Sacrament) as it is recorded by three Evangeliſts. A truth written *radio ſolari*, in *Tertullians* Phraſe, with a Sunbeam, manifeſt to diſcerning judgement, not dimmed with prejudice or cavil.

Luk. 22. 24.

Matth. 26. 25, 26, 27. *Mar.* 14. 23. *Luk.* 22. 19, 20.

Since that *Judas* (his treaſon being diſcovered, but not doomed) was reckoned among Chriſts Diſciples, why may not vitious perſons uncenſured by the Church, who profeſs Chriſtianity, as to that profeſſion be named Saints.

You

You pretend this is contrary to Gods Word; 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. This Text hath been already ſifted. As to your preſent application of it, I anſwer, This debars ſuch offenders from being Members of the Myſtical Church, of that part of it which is triumphant in Heaven, not of the Church Militant, ſo far as it is viſible here on earth.

Your next Text is, 1 *John* 1. 6. (*If we ſay that we have fellowſhip with him, and walk in darkneſs, we lie, and do not the truth.*) This excludes practical, habitual Malefactors (ſuch as walk in darkneſs) from being comprehended in the Catholick inviſible Church, not in a particular viſible Church. The next verſe points out as an evidence of this innocence (*Fellowſhip one with another*) an united Congregation, not a disjointed Separation.

Your third Citation is *Matth.* 3. 7, 8. *And when he ſaw many of the Phariſees come to his baptiſm, he ſaid to them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.*

This

This by way of Analogy (betwixt Baptiſm, and the Euchariſt) proves that every Communicant ought to be a real penitent, not that we ought not to communicate with him, who is a real impenitent.

You ſeem to deal with theſe Texts, to form and fit them to your opinion, as *Procuſtes* did with his gueſts, to proportion their dimenſions to his bed; ſome he hack'd and cut ſhorter, others he rack'd and ſtretch'd out.

You annex a Caveat, *Iſ.* 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; that put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.*

I pray God be merciful to any of either party (*Tros Rutuluſve fuit*) who is juſtly liable to this Commination. When ever your ſeparation is demonſtrated to be good, when your Doctrine is manifeſted to be light, I ſhall not preſume to miſname, nor diſeſteem it.

But if the blaze of Comets be accounted the ſplendor of Stars; if a new Light, that diverts to Schiſm, extinguiſh the old Orthodox; if diviſion,

distraction, confusion in Religion be gilded with the title, the varnish of Reformation, if Sects that are to be bewailed, lamented for, be applauded, gloried in (as some Ladies imagine their little black spots to be grand beauties) then this Caution affords a retortion, and may be weighed by your selves.

You enforce this Caveat of *Isaiah* with *Solomons* Aphorism, *Prov.* xvii. 15. *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, they both are abominable to the Lord.* Whether this is to be interpreted of publick judicature, or private censure, I shall not discuss.

If you appropriate the Epithet Just, as you do Saints to your selves, we honour whatever hath the true savour of Sanctity in you: we are ready to embrace you in our Bowels, in our Church. Upon your averseness we condemn not the Separatist, but the Separation, because erected upon an unwarrantable foundation, upon a Pharisaical presumption. If you apply the wicked, mentioned by *Solomon*, to a Parochial

I Assembly

Assembly formerly aspersit by you to be a company of Drunkards, Swearers, Sabbath-breakers; I am no Advocate to plead for any crimes or scandals. I resent, bewail, and detest them, and upon all fit opportunities shall present the guilt and horror of them to the consciences of the Offenders, in the sharpest accents. Though when ever acted, they are sufficient grounds for the Ministers general reprehension in the Pulpit, yet not of your particular Separation from the Lords Table, till they are declared, sentenced by the Church.

You proceed. They profess Christ, 1 *Cor.*6.15,17. (*Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid*, verse 15. *But he that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit*, vers.17.)

The Apostle doth here by the elegant charm of Sacred Rhetorick dissuade, deter the Christian *Corinthians* from lasciviousness, being the darling sin of *Corinth*, where a thousand beautiful Damosels were the votaries of *Venus* (as *Herodotus* and *Strabo* testifie) *Herodot. in Clio. Strabo, l.8.*

testifie) so that Κορινθιάζειν, became proverbial to be wanton: The spreading contagion of uncleanness there occasioned the Apostles piercing Expostulation, for a searching, healing, at least a preventing Physick. You may hence argue, that fornication severs a profest Christian inwardly from Christ, when ever committed, and not repented of, but not outwardly from the Church, without conviction and promulgation.

You object such make not the Communion, because a mixt Communion is not fit for Christ, his Members must be homogeneal, or else a monster.

This Argument is fallacious, *Ab ignoratione Elenchi.*

Wicked men so far as they are Christs Members, are homogeneal, to wit, in profession, though heterogeneal in conversation, wherein they are not Christ's Members. Your Objection is not *ejusdem secundum idem.*

Real, actual Believers are Members homogeneal inwardly, sincerely: verbal, professional Believers are Members homogeneal outwardly, formally. If this Professional consideration will not serve

ſerve, how do you confeſs Hypocrites to be Members of the Church, ſince they are no otherwiſe homogeneal, than a glaſs eye, or a wooden leg is to a true body, than a painted face is to a genuine complexion, than the *ſhews*, the Paint of Art is to the Beauty of Nature.

Laſtly, you conclude the Church, if not homogeneal, a Monſter; whereas, impiety in Church Members is not monſtroſity till improved to impenitency: ſuch Monſters are to be cut off, to be excommunicated.

Your Caution in the cloſe, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. hath been already diſcuſs'd. The Apoſtle there forbids the *Corinthians* to be yoked with Pagan Unbelievers, because of the profeſt Idolatry: Therefore you will be ſeparate from Chriſtian Believers for their practick iniquity.

The LETTER.

A mixt Communion may do no hurt, what is it to me, what others are? Anſ. *Yes, it will be hurt to him that communicates with ſcandalous brethren,* 1 Cor. 5. 7. *It is not meant there the ſin, but the*

incestuous person. The danger is in vers. 6. *so* Gal. 5. 9. *which is, it may become sin to me in neglecting my duty, if I have not endeavoured the casting out of a scandalous person, as far as it lyeth in me, and in following the rule,* Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17.

The A N S W E R.

You plead it noxious to communicate with scandalous Brethren, from 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. compared with *vers.* 6. I have already vindicated this Text from your gloss, being to be understood of Excommunication, not separation without it. You add, *Gal.* 5. 9. (*A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*) It is a recital of the same maxime, but not with the same scope, or drift. In the fifth Chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, it is applied to the incestuous person, but in the fifth to the *Galatians*, to the infection of Circumcision, a contagious Doctrine.

ὥσπερ ἡ ζύμη οὕτω καὶ ἡ περιτομὴ, *Theophyl. in Gal.* 5.

It is our Saviours Lecture. *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.* Their singularity, their hypocrisie like leaven had a double influence, to swell

Matth. 16. 6. *Luk* 12. 1.

and

and ſower (Arrogance and Virulence) If this leaven be entirely purged out, the queſtion of ſeparation will be completely ſtated, abſolutely determined.

If we will ſeparate from the Phariſee, in the ſecret mortification of our own boſoms, we cannot ſeparate from the Publican, in the publick pious devotion of the Temple.

This primary duty being conſcientiouſly obſerved (of purging the corruption of our own hearts) the ſecondary duty will much more dextrouſly be diſcharged, to endeavour ſo far as in us lyeth (within the compaſs of our own Sphere, or calling) to cleanſe the Congregation (of its corruption (a ſcandalous perſon.)

The Rule propoſed, *Matth.* 18. 15, 16, 17. hath been copiouſly examined, though by your ſelves ſcantily obſerved.

The LETTER.

If I have gone ſo far by profeſſing and witneſſing againſt it, I diſcharged my duty, or elſe I ſin, and if the Church will

not do it after long patience and waiting, I know no warrant to continue in such a diseased body, that will not, nor cannot purge out its infectious humours, that wants such a precious Ordinance of Jesus Christ, of separating the precious from the vile, Hag. 2. 12, 13, 14. *That the unholy do defile, and unhallow the holy in such a way, as I said before, so that to communicate in such a way is sin.*

The ANSWER.

It ought to be our prime care in this exigency, not to partake of the sins of other men (when they are vitious and scandalous) not to be engaged in them by Precept, or Precedent, by advice or example, by assistance or countenance, nay, not by connivence, silence.

If the Church doth not excommunicate, yet are not we commissioned to separate. But you know no warrant to continue in a diseased body that cannot, will not purge out her infectious humours. The desire of the Church of *England* is fervent, though impotent

vent for her power; impotent not in *actu primo* for conſtitution, but *actu ſecundo* for execution. Eccleſiaſtical cenſure is not impoſed, becauſe oppoſed. Will you charge outward impediments for inward defects of the Church.

You tax the want of the pretious Ordinance of ſeparating the pretious from the vile, to be a ground for your ſeparating and offer for a proof.

Hag. 2. 12, 13, 14. *If one bear holy Fleſh in the Skirt of his Garment, and with his Skirt do touch Bread or Pottage, or Wine, or Oyl, or any meat, ſhall it be holy? And the Prieſt anſwered and ſaid, No.*

Then ſaid Haggai, if one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of theſe, ſhall it be unclean? And the Prieſt anſwered and ſaid, It ſhall be unclean.

Then anſwered Haggai, and ſaid, So is this people, and ſo is this nation before me, ſaith the Lord, and ſo is every work of their hands, and that which they offer there is unclean.

The Judgement of the Prieſt was not erroneous, if any unclean perſon touch bread, it ſhall be unclean to him that

that is unclean, not to him that is clean. Thus an impenitent person polluteth what he receiveth to himself in the Communion, not what the penitent receiveth. *To the pure all things are pure*, 1 Tit. 15.

This Testimony of *Haggai* concerns a Judaical, Ceremonial, Ritual Defilement; which is not directly argumentative to infer a Moral, an Evangelical. As for the Application of it, the Prophet manifests the Sacrifices of the Jews to be impure, because their hearts were; resembling them to those that contract impurity by the dead. Thus *Junius* and *Tremelius* understood it. This Text admits no consequence, no inference to your advantage.

Quibus typis innuit Deus illorum judiciorum causas quæ in Judæis hactenus exercuerat, nimirum quod nullam sanctitatem in uncto aut rebus sanctificatis Deo percepissent, quia impuri animis suis fuerant non minus quam illi qui ex cadavere impuritatem contraxerant. Jun. & Trem. in Hag. 2. vers. 12, 13, 14.

If one unclean by a dead body, &c. Thus might he so covertly manage, that it might be concealed, not discerned; and yet the thing he touch'd was unclean. Whence what can you deduce except it be that even Hypocrites undiscovered do pollute the Sacraments, and render them unclean to every

every one that communicates with them? (A Poſition you will not aſſert) ſo from ſome mens uncleanneſs the holy Inſtitutions of God ſhould be defiled to others, who can be unſoiled. God help us, with whom ſhould any man communicate to aſſure himſelf of exemption from this pollution.

Yea, but I know the man is unclean. That I cannot peremptorily determine, becauſe of his being preſent, his deſire and deſign to receive the Seal of his Salvation in Charity, induces me to a perſwaſion, at leaſt prompts me to a hope, that he is penitent.

Hezekiahs candor deſerves a ſerious conſideration, a pious imitation. (*For a multitude of people, even many of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, Iſſachar and Zebulun, had not cleanſed themſelves: yet did they eat the paſſover otherwiſe than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, ſaying, The good Lord pardon every one, that prepareth his heart to ſeek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleanſed according to the purification of the ſanctuary.*) 2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19.

This Prayer, that abounded in Charity

Charity, was not ſcanted for ſucceſs. A great compaſſion of man was owned, and crowned by a greater of God. 'Tis recorded in the next verſe, *and the Lord hearkned to Hezekiah, and healed the people.* Though our Congregations are *not cleanſed according to the purification of the ſanctuary*, yet I wiſh you would rather commiſerate, than ſeparate, exerciſe yearning bowels to bemoan, rather than branding Epithets to doom; that you would rather pray for us, than cenſure. This will neither hallow our people, nor your ſelf.

† 2 Chron. 30. 20.

But (*à Diverticulo ad viam*) to return to your Objection, the rational force whereof is Sophiſtical, *non cauſa pro cauſa.* The want of Excommunication in the Church of *England*, is no ſufficient warrant for your ſeparation. This at moſt imports an imperfection, not an abolition. I appeal to *Calvin's* Judgement. We do no leſs eſteem it a Church (for this defect) we perſiſt

Si hic ordo (ſcil. Excom.) alicui Eccleſiæ deſit, imperfectione tam, & prava macula notatam eſſe, ſed non eo minus pro Eccleſiæ ipſam habemus, ac perſiſtimus in ejus communione, atq; affirmamus ſingulis ab ea ſegregare non licere, Calv. adv. Anabap.

in

in its Communion, we aver it not lawful for men to segregate, to separate themselves from it.

This also is *Paræus* decision, where Ecclesiastical Censures cannot be obtained by the iniquity of the Governours, or the obstinacy of the People, he recommends Prudence and Patience to all, to Pastors a special diligence (to support the of want rigorous Discipline, with the power of vigorous Doctrine) considering our Saviours consolation. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.* But he admonisheth to shun the pestilent opinion of the Donatists, as if there were no true Church, where there is not this severe Discipline.

Nec censuras Ecclesiasticas sive superiorum iniquitate sive populi pervicacia habere possunt ad patientiam sese cum prudentia Christiana hoc modo componant; ut primo quidem defectum disciplinarum docendi officio ac sedulitate pensare studeant cogitentq; ex ore Dei beatos esse qui esuriunt & sitiunt justitiam quia saturabuntur. Deinde caveant in eam vre sententiam aut venire opinionem, quasi Ecclesia esse non possit, aut non sit, ubi nulla est excommunicationis disciplina. Hæc Permeniani & Donatistarum olim erat pestilens opinio. Paræus in 1 Ep. ad Corinth. cap. 5.

Polanus confidently resolves, That a Church is not immediately to be dis-

Non propter disciplinæ Ecclesiasticæ negligentiam aut cessationem statim Ecclesia est neganda. Polan. in Synt. l. 7. c. 8.

avowed

avowed upon neglect or ceſſation of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline. To omit other numerous Teſtimonies, I ſhall add only *Zanchies* determination (the reformed learned Schoolman) in what Churches ſoever the Fundamental Summary of Apoſtolical Doctrine is retained, and therein no manifeſt idolatry admitted, Peace and Communion is to be regarded with thoſe Aſſemblies, as the true Churches of Chriſt.

Quanquam errores & defectus nunquam ſunt diſſimulandi: in quibuſcunq; tamen fundamentum & ſumma doctrinæ Apoſtolicæ retinetur, eoq; nulla manifeſta committitur idolatria cum iis cætibus tanquam veris Chriſti Eccleſiis pacem & communionem colendam eſſe ſentimus. Tanti faciendæ eſt unio Eccleſiarum. Zanch. de Chriſt. cap. 24. ſect. 10.

So greatly is Eccleſiaſtical Unity to be eſteemed.

Were this ſober moderate Rule aſſented to, it would put your ſeparatiſts on to the bluſh; which it ſelf alone, (being the fertile Womb of a various prodigious iſſue of Sects in this Climate) is a greater ſcandal to the Reformed Religion, than all thoſe vitious, notorious practices, (not puniſh'd with Church Cenſures, whereby it is pretended to be juſtified.)

This is the harmonious opinion of Reformed Divines.

If

If these ἄτεχνα, these inartificial Arguments, if their Authority sway not; I shall add ἔντεχνα, artificial from the grand Topick, the end of Excommunication, which spreads it self into three eminent Branches, (1. That the Church may be vindicated. 2. That the Offender may be reclaimed. 3. That others may not be infected.) Neither design is advanced by Separation.

Si damnaremus excommunicationem aut suadaremus inutilem esse & supervacaneam tunc murmurandi adversum nos occasionem haberent. Calv. ad. An.

The Church of *England* is by you unjustly scandal'd, branded (being indeed not corrupted in its self as rejecting Excommunication, but disabled, restrained from executing it.)

Offenders are hereby more exasperated, tempted to be more depraved, being deserted in those acts, wherein they are not Offenders, being doomed unheard, unsummon'd.

Lastly, others are more endangered to be infected, being abandon'd unwarrantably by those, by whose exemplary Graces they might be preserved untainted.

The

The LETTER.

So then I conclude thus. That to communicate with ſuch perſons, and in a Church that generally conſiſts of ſuch as we are commanded above to withdraw, and ſeparate from, is ſin.

To communicate in and with the Pariſhes of England, *is ſo to communicate, therefore 'tis ſin.*

The ANSWER.

I have already diſcovered the invalidity of your Major, in thoſe inſtances produced; whence it is collected.

I deny your Minor Propoſition. To communicate in and with the Pariſhes of the Church of *England*, is not to communicate with thoſe we are commanded by God to ſeparate from, your proof is *Fallacia Accidentis*. The wickedneſs wherein we are to ſeparate is extrinſecal, accidental to the holineſs wherein we communicate.

Were our Pariſhes ſuch as you deſcypher them, yet were it no ſin to communicate

municate in and with them for acts of neceſſary duty, of piety; but of unneceſſary familiarity, intimacy, impiety. It is no ſin to communicate with ſuch ſinners Sacramentally, whilſt ſuch ſinners are not excommunicated.

The LETTER.

A Church that generally conſiſts of ignorant, prophane and ſcandalous perſons, and ſcoffers therein, is a degenerate Church, and not ſafely to be communicated with, when other lawful ways are offered.

But ſuch are generally the people of the Pariſhes of England *and* Wales, *as ſad experience teſtifieth, and ſo a degenerated Church.*

Therefore not ſafely to be communicated with.

It was Gods controverſie with the Church, Rev. 2. 20.

The ANSWER.

I may except againſt your Major Propoſition. For a Church is not to be eſtimated by the Errors, the Frailties, nay, the enormities, the prodigies

of ſome Members, but by its own Laws (eſtabliſhments, acknowledgements) and by the manners, the practices of the better, the ſounder part, ſaith *Peter Martyr*.

Eccleſiæ non ex quorundum erroribus, infirmitatibus, flagitiis, ſed ex legibus & ſanioris partis moribus æſtimanda. Pet. Mart. in loc. com.

Eccleſiæ æſtimandæ ex eo quod communiſſime & latiſſime tenetur. Whitak. de Not. Eccl.

The bent of your Argument is fallacious, *A dicto ſecundum quid ad dictum ſimpliciter*, whilſt you tax the conſtitution of the Church for the corruption of its Members.

However, I deny your Minor Propoſition, which is illogically expreſſed, and helps to ſhape your Syllogiſm a Paralogiſm by excreſcence of terms. I ſhall crave leave to rectifie, to regulate it.

Let [teſtified by ſad experience] be inſerted in your Major Propoſition. A Church that, teſtified by ſad experience, conſiſts of ignorant, prophane, ſcandalous perſons, is not ſafely to be communicated with, when other lawful ways are offered.

Let your Minor be thus framed. Such are generally the people of the Pariſhes of *England*, as ſad experience teſtifieth, when other lawful ways are offered.

I

I presume it was not your inadvertency to omit this Clause (when other ways are offered) being in this Controversie of special importance.

Your Minor Proposition being thus enlarged, contains a charge of the Church of *England*, and a discharge of your selves from its Communion, a redress by other lawful ways offered.

The first part is not so properly a Proposition, as an Aspersion. This is to calumniate, not demonstrate (The Church of *England* generally consists of ignorant, prophane, scandalous persons and scoffers.)

Hoc Ithacus velit, & magno mercentur Atridæ.

The Jesuit will congratulate and applaud this invective, which partly justifies *Bellermines* censorious condemnation. It is notorious manifest to all, that among Hereticks (he means Protestants) there is not one good gracious person.

Ex Hereticis nullus est bonus. Res ipsa est notissima. Bellar. de not. Eccl. l. 4. c. 13.

You here reinforce your former impeachment of ignorance, as if a se-

parate Church were the *Goſhen* of a new ſacred Light, and the Church of *England* were like the reſt of *Egypt* overſpread with ſuperſtitious darkneſs. I have already endeavoured to vindicate it from this imputation.

To ignorant you add the brand of prophane, ſcandalous ſcoffers, as if your ſeparation were like *Gideons* Fleece, beſprinkled with the dew of Heaven, whilſt the Church of *England* is parch'd with barbariſm of infidelity.

Rom. 11. 20. Be it ſo, yet *be not high minded, but fear*; leſt your ſpiritual tumor alter the Scene, remove the Candleſtick. Pride tainted *Adam* in Paradiſe, the Angels in Heaven (once bleſſed Spirits, now damned Fiends.) Remember the ſecond part of the Miracle, *Gideons* Fleece partch'd, all about it bedewed. *Mary Magdalen*, who was once poſſeſſed with Devils, was afterward repleniſh'd with Graces. Theſe ſcoffers you tax may (by Gods Grace) mourn for their ſcoffs: Thoſe prophane perſons, who o'erflow in their cups, may o'erflow in their ſorrows, and exchange a deluge of diſtempers for

for tears, their frequent oaths and imprecations, for penitent prayers and ſupplications. And though the outward fruit be blaſted, to your eye; yet there may be ſecret buds and bloſſoms diſcernible to God, and acceptable in Chriſt, notwithſtanding thoſe apparent witherings. There may be deep ſighs and ſobs of ſpirit, paſſionate yernings, and pantings for Grace, where there are no manifeſt effects of it. Will you deny the balm of *Gilead* to theſe bleeding wounds of Souls? *The ſound have no need of the phyſician but the ſick.* Matth. 11. 28.

Our captivity intereſts us in a Redeemer, our iniquity in a Saviour, who ſummons, attracts, thoſe who are heavy laden, clogged with their tranſgreſſions, to be disburdned of this weight and preſſure, who came not to call δικαίους, juſt perſons, who juſtifie themſelves; but ἁμαρτωλοὺς, heinous, ſcandalous ſinners to repentance; that ſo where ſin abounds (for apprehenſion, conviction, as well as commiſſion) there Grace (of remiſſion) may much more abound.

To conclude, as to the firſt part of

Homo ſum de area Chriſti, hujus aræ ventilabrum non eſt lingua Petiliani. Aug. contra Petil. l. 1. c. 10.

your Minor Propoſition: Thoſe ignorant prophane perſons in the Church of *England*, are of Chriſts viſible floor, your pen is not the fan of that floor, to diſpel, to reject them as chaff; nor are they to be deemed ſo by you, till doomed ſo by the Church.

The ſecond part of your Minor Propoſition aſſerts other lawful ways offered beſides communicating with the Church of *England* degenerated.

Separation is no lawful way, this is *Petitio principii*, the begging, not the proving of the Queſtion. This loud vaunt of other lawful ways is not unlike the Cyclops clamor in *Homer*, Στις Στις. It is but an empty ſound.

Dr. Kellett in the firſt b. of his Miſcel. chap. 8.

It is the grave Caveat of Dr. *Kellet*, take it in his own expreſſion. Reaſons more than ordinary, will be expected by God and good men from him, who leapeth out of the Church, in which he was born and bred, kicking at the breaſts of his Mother, running with the bit in his teeth, his own ways. He chalks out theſe paths as the moſt lawful ways, and expedients. Firſt,

Jer. 4. 14. Integrity, *To waſh the heart from wickedneſs.* A Church is ill contradicted

tradicted by ill depraved men.)

2. To pray for, and practice humility. *First cast out the beam out of thy own eye, and thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brothers eye,* (so likewise out of thy Mothers eye.) Mat. 7. 5.

A second Expedient is conference (without prejudice) with learned pious Pastors of a different Opinion; that truth (not interest or faction) may impartially be promoted. If our addresses be made to, our discourses held only with those, who are byast with our own Tenets, we must expect to be soothed, applauded in our judgements, not informed and rectified.

If after these assays having been sanctified, humbled, having conferred we remain yet unsatisfied, he prescribes a retired mourning and silence; wherein he pleads the current judgement of *Jerome, Ockam,* and Dr. *Field.*

Thus without separation may the peace of the Church, and our own innocence be secured inviolable.

Thus with Unity and Humility of spirit may we uprightly renounce the

Errors and Vices of any Members of the Church, but not renounce the Church it ſelf for the Errors and Vices of any of its members.

Laſtly, you affix to your Concluſion, as an appendant to your Argument, as a corollary naturally reſulting (though of a far different Extraction and Linage,) *Rev.* 2. 20. *Notwithſtanding I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt the woman Jeſabel, which calleth her ſelf a propheteſs to teach, and to ſeduce my ſervants to commit fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed to idols.* I ſhall not diſpute whether the woman *Jeſabel* be meant *Helena* (*Simon Magus* laſcivious darling) or *Priſcilla*, the wanton Minion of *Montanus*, or any Gnoſtick unchaſt favourite (wherein learned Expoſitors vary in their conjectures) *Beza* and *Junius* underſtood fornication in that verſe, to be an idolatrous ſacrifice or worſhip ſeconded expreſly with an idolatrous Feaſt, to eat things ſacrificed to Idols. Becauſe the Angel of the Church of *Thyatyra* is reproved for permitting idolatry; will you hence conclude, that the Church of

of *England* is not to be communicated by a private person in her Sacramental Piety.

You object, it was Gods Controversie. I grant a Controversie it was, not a Judgement, ('tis *lis sub judice*) no sentence past, no Bill of Divorce, no Separation. This instance is very inconsiderately obtruded. How gentle is the Controversie (*I have a few things against thee,*) It is no sharp Indictment. In the immediately precedent verse, God vouchsafes a high Elogy. *I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience.* Revel. 2. 19.

Though *Jesabel* was suffered, connived at, yet others were not corrupted, not counsell'd to separate from the Church for that permission, but their perseverance in good is instructed, and a recompence promised, *vers.* 24, 25, 26.

Blemishes are recited in other Churches, specified in the same Chapter, but the unblemish'd are not advised to a Separation, to a Schism, for any stain or corruption.

The

The LETTER.

God never inſtituted ſuch a Church, wherein his whole Worſhip, and all his Ordinances might not be injoyed.

But ſome, if not many of the Pariſhes are ſuch, that all his Ordinances cannot be enjoyed.

To prove this, I will inſtance in the Ordinance of Excommunication. If all ſhould be excommunicated, as the word requires, I could make it appear (though I heartily deſire it were otherwiſe) that moſt, if not all, in many Pariſhes ſhould be excommunicated, and then where will the Church of England *be, and other Ordinances enjoyed.*

The ANSWER.

This Argument is lyable to Logical Exception (the terms being varyed, and thereby multiplied.) But I ſhall not ſcruple at the form, but anſwer to the matter of your Syllogiſm.

The Major Propoſition is not abſolutely true to be granted, nor abſolutely falſe

falſe to be denied, but ambiguous to be diſtinguiſh'd.

Gods Ordinances is an equivocal expreſſion. Some Ordinances are eſſential, requiſite to the conſtitution, the very being of the Church, others are accidental Ornaments to conduce to its perfection, its well being: Of the firſt ſort are the preaching of the Word only, and the adminiſtration of the Sacraments (in the judgement of the beſt reformed Worthies, in direct oppoſition to the Romaniſts.) Of the later ſort is the Ordinance of Excommunication.

That Church which entirely wants the former ſort, is not of Divine Inſtitution, or Approbation: In the later we muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt not approving Excommunication to be practiſed, and not practiſing it, being approved; and in the not practiſing, there is a vaſt difference betwixt a willing conſent, and an unwilling reſtraint. This laſt is the caſe of the Church of *England*, which deſires to enjoy the Ordinance of Excommunication, according to the Primitive, Apoſtolical Purity, and vehemently bewails

bewails its not enjoying. So that the ſubſtance of your Argument is a Sophiſm, *A dicto ſecundum quid ad dictum ſimpliciter.* From an outward impediment, to an inward defect in the Church of *England*; from its diſaſter, to its default; from its calamity, to its impiety, its nullity.

I may tender the retortion of your Argument for its refutation.

God never inſtituted ſuch a Church, wherein his whole Worſhip, and all his Ordinances cannot be enjoyed. But ſome, if not all, of the collected Churches are ſuch, that all his Ordinances cannot be enjoyed. Therefore.

To prove the Minor, I will inſtance in ſinging Pſalms, reading the Scripture, baptiſing Infants, which are not allowed, nor practiſed in ſome collected Churches. I only hint this retortion, and proceed to your illuſtration, which is over ſevere like *Dracos* Law written in Blood, accented with horror; that you could make it appear, that if we ſhould be excommunicated, that the Word requires, that moſt, if not all, in many Pa-

riſhes

riſhes ſhould be excommunicated.

Tertius è cœlo cecidit Cato—

Give me leave to allay your rigor, as a prudent Senator did *Cato's*, that he expected a Platonick Commonwealth in the dreggs of *Romulus*.

Here you ſentence moſt, if not all, in many Pariſhes, to have merited Excommunication; in a former objection you widely, expreſly charge the Pariſhes of the Churches of *England* generally to conſiſt of ignorant, prophane, ſcandalous ſcoffers. You have been no Vicar General to viſit all the Parochial Churches, having reſided in a nook of the Nation, and cannot in that Angle judge exactly of the whole, like him who diſcovered the meaſure of *Hercules* body by his foot. But it is not in point of quality of actions, as of quantity and dimenſions. The Body Natural, Political, and Eccleſiaſtical are not alike diſcern'd.

Your harſh cenſure hath its foundation in conjecture or rumour; neither will warrant its ſtability, or integrity

tegrity. In ſuch caſes, if falſe, you judgement perverſe; if true, 'tis precipitate, 'tis raſh (as *Aquinas* ſtates it.)

God examined, endicted before he doomed *Adam*, or *Cain*. Though the ſin of *Sodom* was heinous, and clamorous, aſcended from Earth to Heaven though it pierced the Clouds, and was conſpicuous in the face of the Sun; yet God reſolved to deſcend from Heaven to Earth, to proceed to inquiſition, before condemnation (*I will go down and ſee*) though not to ſatisfie himſelf; yet to inſtruct us. He preſcribes a ſingular exemplary, legal candor, in *Deut.* 22. 23, 24, 25. A Damoſel guilty of actual uncleanneſs in the City is condemned, but charged with that impure act in the Field is acquitted, becauſe if ſhe had cryed, oppoſed in the City, ſhe might have been heard, relieved; but in the remote Field (the caſe being doubtful) with a mixture of Equity and Charity, it is decided that ſhe cryed, was raviſh'd, becauſe not evidently to be diſproved.

Gen. 3. 9, 11. *Gen.* 4. 9, 10.

Gen. 18. 21.

Cum omnia nuda & aperta ſint mala, tamen Sodomæ noluit ante judicare quam probare nos inſtruere ne mala hominum ante preſumeremus credere quam probare. Greg. Hom. 17. *in Evang.*

The Rule of the Civil Law is not inconſiſtent

conſiſtent with the Evangelical. In doubtful caſes the milder interpretation is to be eſteemed the better. If you will ſtill perſiſt with confidence to brand our Pariſhes upon the experience, perhaps of others, I ſhall reply only, *Let him that is without ſin* (exempted from the preſent iniquity, and future capacity of it, as the pregnancy of the word Ἀναμάρτητος imports) *caſt the firſt ſtone,* St. Johns Goſp. chap. 8. verſ. 7.

—Iliacos intra muros peccatur & extra.—

I muſt confeſs with horror and anguiſh of ſoul, that the practical corruptions, the abominations of many in our Pariſhes are too great, which calls for the ſharpeſt contrition of our ſouls in groans and agonies; with the vileſt humiliation of our bodies, the moſt abject proſtration in Sack-cloath and Aſhes. Yet we are not the ſole offenders.

There is little, too little ſincerity of Chriſtianity among the ſons of men; who make choice of oppoſite Vertues and Vices to ſerve ſecular intereſts, to ſatisfie ſenſual appetites.

I wish from my soul your separation were as guiltless for spiritual trespasses, as our Parishes are guilty of carnal: That the maturity of our iniquity (as you urge) may prevent yours, that there were no tincture of avarice or malice out of our Parochial Congregations: That the voice being *Jacobs* voice, there might be no hands of *Esau*; that you were all endowed as well as titled Saints, to be heavenly men, according to the Greek Etymology, sequestred, refined from earthly dregs. But the detestation of our gross offences is no priviledge, nor plea before Gods dreadful Tribunal, for the prosecution of your own, though spun with a finer thread.

I pray God of all hands pierce us with a deep mournful apprehension of our own personal offences; that our Parochial Assemblies may be more sober and devout; and that your separate Churches may be more humble and charitable.

Before I quit this Argument, let me admonish your candor and suspense in point of Excommunication.

Tanta

—Tantæ ne animis cœlestibus iræ?

It is no prudent ſoul Chirurgery; nor innocent, to be too buſie tampering with the ſaw. The Spiritual Sword of Excommunication, is not haſtily to be unſheathed, It ſavours of the Papal violence to thunder out *Anathemaes* againſt whole Reformed Churches. St. *Iræneus* juſtly blames *Victor* for his fierceneſs of ſpirit, his proneneſs to excommunicate the Churches of *Aſia*. The Primitive Church herein proceeded with much wary weighty deliberation (ſaith *Tertullian*) as in the ſolemn preſence of God.

Nulli Chriſtianorum facilis communio deneganda, Leo Epi. 87.

Nam & judicatur magno cum pondere apud certos de Dei conſpectu. Tert. adv. Gent.

Paræus adviſeth ſpecial moderation, becauſe of humane infirmity, and contingency of dubious Events; it is a corroſive Medicine, as very grievous, ſo very perillous. In this particular,

Qui habere poſſunt moderate ea utantur, & caveant à rigore, quia ob infirmitatem humanam eventuſq; dubios, medicina eſt ut valde dolorifica, ſic admodum periculoſa. Par. in 1 Cor. c. 5.

——Fas eſt & ab hoſte doceri.

It was a good ſanction, though of no good Council (that of *Trent*) Although the Sword of Excommunication be the ſinew of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, and very wholeſome to contain the people in their duty, yet is ſoberly, and very circumſpectly to be exerciſed.

Quamvis excommunicationis gladius nervus ſit Eccleſiaſticæ Diſciplinæ, & ad continendos in officio populos valde ſalutaris, ſobrie tamen magnaque cum circumſpectione exercendus.

Since experience tutors us, that if managed with raſh paſſion upon light occaſion, it is rather contemned than dreaded, rather deſtructive than preſervative.

Cum experientia docuit, ſi temere aut levibus ex rebus incutiatur, magis contemni quam formidari, & perniciem potius parere quam ſalutem. Cont. Trid. Sect. 25. c. 3.

Father *Paul* the Venetian (the Author of the excellent Hiſtory of that Council of *Trent*) reputed this Canon worthy to be engraven with Letters of Gold.

It is in effect confeſt both by Primitive and Modern Divines, that obſtinacy againſt the Authority of the Church

Church is *cauſa primo movens*, firſt moving; at leaſt *promovens*, promoting Excommunication. Your own Arguments frequently intimate it.

Spirituali gladio ſuperbi & contumaces necantur. Cypr. li. Ep. 11.

Pertinaces eſſe excommunicandos tantum idq; cum pertinacia eorum toti Eccleſiæ nota fuerit facta. ait Zanch. in quartum Præcept.

If ſo, what greater contumely, contumacy againſt the Church of *England*, than of her own ſeparated Members (in whom her juſt intereſt is not cancelled, though not eſteemed) If ſhe proceeds to Excommunication you diſclaim, ſpurn at it; If ſhe proceeds not to Excommunication, you quarrel for this neglect. Separation is (in ſome reſpects at leaſt) more excommunicable, than prophanation, Schiſm than diſtemper. A deboſh'd man, if diſcreetly reprehended (otherwiſe it is a reproach, not a reproof) will bluſh or tremble, but a ſeparatiſt diſdain, inſult; he diſturbs the peace of the Church, tears its Unity: the other perverts himſelf, diſquiets his own conſcience.

The Apoſtle ſo paſſionately reſents the wound of Eccleſiaſtical faction, that he burſt out. *I would they* Gal. 5. 12.

were even cut off that trouble you. 'Tis Ἀναστατοῦντες, that are unſetling, removing you from your firſt ſtation in the Church. That they were cut off that trouble you. 'Tis Ἀποκόψονται, the Greek Phraſe in the Primitive Church for Excommunication.

Eſt nonnihil emphaſeos in conjunctione ὄφελον (i.) amputentur, ſive reſecentur, non ſolum judicentur, ſed etiam Anathema fiant. Eraſm. in Gal. 5.

Rom. 16.17.

Σκοπεῖν *eſt attente, diligenter quaſi hoſtes è ſpecula obſervetis, Beza in Rom.* 16.17.

The Apoſtle preſcribes a receſs, a diſtance as from excommunicated perſons. *Mark them which cauſe diviſions and offences contrary to the doctrine you have learned, and avoid them:* σκοπεῖν is to obſerve diligently, to ken them, as Enemies from a watch Tower; and when they are diſcovered, ἐκκλίνατε, decline, wave them; *Theophylacts* gloſs is Ἀποπηδᾶτε, recoyl. The Method is obſerved by St. *Chryſoſtom*, and *Oecumenius*: Firſt, Diviſions, then Scandals, Diviſion being the prime ſubverſion of the Church. Whilſt it is united, Satan is not admitted, Scandals are not ſtarted. Theſe

That you exclude them as prophane out of your publick Aſſemblies by Excommunication, *Diodati on Rom.* 16.17. Αὕτη γὰρ μάλιστα ἐκκλησίας ἀναίρεσις τὸ διαῤῥῆξαι καὶ σχίσαι. *Oecum. Rom.* 16.

offences

offences are expounded Hereſies by the ſame Fathers. Hereſies are in the Apoſtles carnal liſt, as well as ſenſual vices, they are alike execrable, titled damnable by the holy Ghoſt. *Gal.*5.19, 20, 21. *Pet.* 2.*Ep.* 2.*ch.* *v.*1.

It is an Apoſtolical conſtitution, never to be abrogated. *Though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other doctrine, than that which we have preach'd to you, let him be accurſt.* Not that an Angel from Heaven can preach any heretical Doctrine, but mortal men on Earth may, who pretend an Angelical heavenly ſanctity: If any ſuch be, the doom is determined. Let him be *Anathema.* It is a ſort of Excommunication, *Heſychius*, the firſt Chriſtian Grammarian gloſſeth it by Ἀκοινώνητος, excommunicated. Are not all the doctrinals of Chriſtian Religion exploded by ſome or other ſeparated Members, who in this Climate, in a few years have vented more hereſies and blaſphemies than any age, perhaps more than all the ages ſince the Apoſtles. *Gal.*1.8.

So accounted by *Iſ. Caſaubon* upon *Athenæus.*

Anathema ſit, id eſt ſegregatus, ſeparatus, excluſus. Vincent. Lyrin. adv. Hereſ.

Tantum religio potuit ſuadere malorum.

I never yet heard of any excommunicated for a Heretick out of any ſeparate Church.

Indulgentiam ſibi invicem tribuerunt, ut crimina in ſilentium mitterent ſua, vitam infamare conati ſunt alienam, Optat. l. 1. de Schiſ. Donat.

Even in point of practical converſation, The Donatiſts, who preſſed the ſame objection againſt the African Orthodox Churches, yet embraced in their own vitious and ſcandalous *Gildorinians*, *Primians*, *Circumcelliones*, indulging each other in impieties, obſcuring their own crimes by defaming others. I ſhall not offer to revive any ſuch black impeachment, that may reflect on the preſent ſeparation.

—— Per me equidem ſint omnia protinus alba.

I have enlarged this meditation, not out of the leaſt deſire that the Church of *England*, if in its full power and luſtre, ſhould exerciſe its ſevere juriſdiction towards thoſe of your opinion, but only to blunt your keen edge, and allay your rigor. I am no *Boanerges*, no Son of Thunder towards any that are conſcienciouſly erroneous.

Laſtly, becauſe the defect of Excommunication is the main hinge of your

your ſeparating from the Church of *England*, I pray recollect your ſelf, and conſider the true tenor and rigor of Excommunication, with the ancient practice of it.

That which you account Excommunication, is rather to be named Excommunion.

That ſpreading Generation of men, which reject all Sacred Ordinances, do not dread but deride this doom.

It is not to them a Thunder-bolt, but a Rattle.

Thoſe prophane perſons in the Church of *England* excepted againſt (and for them the Church it ſelf) are either ſuch as reſent their ungracious courſes, relent for them (theſe being not juſtly to be excommunicated) or elſe they are habitual obdurate Offenders. This ſentence (as you ſeem to underſtand) is to them an indulgence; it ſerves to gratifie, not terrifie them, depriving them of that Sacrament, whereof they deprived themſelves.

If you caſt an eye upon the Judaical, and the Ancient Chriſtian Diſcipline (Eccleſiaſtical) This appears but the firſt gradation of Ex-

communication, nay, ſcarce that.

R. Juda in Si. Moſ. 95. 1. Buxtorf. in Juſt. Epiſt.

The firſt ſtep among the Jews was *Niddui*, which ſignifies ſeparation (twenty four cauſes whereof are recited.) This was in ſome meaſure and degree a remotion, not only from Eccleſiaſtical, but Civil and Domeſtick Society, ſuch was not to be approached to within four paces, of this ſort probably was *Cains* Excommunication. Thoſe who were excommunicated, were the *Menudde*, who were diſcerned by their lips cover'd, and confined to the gate of the Mourners, not admitted to the gate of the Bridegrooms. This is that ſeparation mention'd, *Luk.* 6. 22. The excluſion putting out of the Synagogue, *Johh* 9. 22. the 12. 42. and 16. 2. This was a limited cenſure for three days. Such was the reſtraint of the *Abſtenti* (mention'd by St. *Cyprian*) But the Offenders perſevering obſtinate, there was a ſecond gradation, an aggravation of cenſure, without limitation of time.

Cherem with the addition of ſolemn Moſaical execration, without capacity of being Rabby or Diſciple (neither being debarred in the former grada-

gradation) without liberty of acceſs to any part of the Temple or Synagogue.

This judgement proving ineffectual, the delinquent perſiſting impenitent. The third Gradation, *Samatha*, (or *Schammatha*) is an intire proſcription, a baniſhing from any Society of Gods people, an ultimate appeal, an immediate ſurrender to Divine vengeance.

The Canoniſts and Schoolmen diſtinguiſh a leſſer, and a greater Excommunication (how warrantably as to Scripture Rules I diſcuſs not) the leſſer is a ſuſpenſion from the Sacrament; but the greater from all holy Aſſemblies and Duties (as Prayers and Sermons in the Congregation.) This is a delivering to Satan to be deſtitute of the Spiritual Armory, for reſiſting, rejecting Satan, and in the Primitive Apoſtolical Church to be outwardly afflicted, corporally tormented by him.

1 *Cor.* 5. 5. 1 *Tim.* 1. 20.

Si quis delinquerit ut à communicatione Orationis, & conventus & omnis ſancti commercii religetur. Tert. in Apol. adv. Gent. & cap. 39.

The

This greater Excommunication doth disprivileдge the living from legal Judicature, and the dead from solemn Christian Sepulture, not admitting the excommunicated till absolv'd into the Church for any act of Communion, Devotion, or Attention: Not into Civil Courts for any Testimonies, not into private Houses for repast (unless in special exigencies and relations) allowing them neither the Commodity of Commerce of Traffick, nor the familiarity of converse, of discourse (there being a glimmering resemblance hereof among the Heathens in *Orestes Adrastus*, in the judgement of *Melanchthon.*) The Schoolmen expres these restraints in a Poetical summary.

Excommunicatio minor separat tantum à participatione Sacramentorum; Major Excommunicatio separat hominem & à Sacramentis Ecclesiæ & à Communione fidelium, Aquin. in suppl. 3. part. Qu. 23. Act. 1.

Vide formam Excommunicationis in Concil. Francic. & apud Gratian. 11. 9. 11. Canonica institutæ (A Gremio sanctæ matris Ecclesiæ, & à consortio totius Christianitatis eliminamus.)

Si pro delictis Anathema quis efficiatur,
Os, orare, vale, communio, mensa negatur.

Even in relaxation of this severe censure, there was in the Greek Church a gradual progres chalk'd out

out before a plenary abſolution. The firſt Station is πρόκλαυσις, To be weepers without the gate of the Church, in a doleful note to ſupplicate for the Prayers of thoſe that enter in (who paſſionately mourn for them, ſaith *Origen*, as for the dead.) The Second Station is ἀκρόασις, To be Auditors within the gate. The third Station is ὑπόπτωσις, for an Humiliation of Devotion to pray, and depart with the *Catechumeni*. The fourth Station is σύστασις, to be rank'd with the faithful in the Congregation. The laſt Station, the perfection of the reſt, is μέθεξις, to be re-admitted to the Sacred Euchariſt.

Vide Canonem, Greg. Neo-Cæſarienſis de 5 loc. Penit. ἀς νεκρὸς πενθοῦσι. *Orig. contra Celſum l.3.*

Theſe gradual abatements, and inhancements of judiciary ſeverity, may be ſingular reſtraints to curb the looſe reigns of prophaneneſs in thoſe that retain any reverence to the Ordinance of Church Diſcipline. However, to be debarred Civil Enfranchiſing, and Domeſtick Offices will bridle the moſt inſolent extravagant Offenders, who have the leaſt ingenuity of Nature. To conclude this point inſenſibly ſpun out beyond my intention.

--*Cur-*

——*Currente rota*——

As for your objection of whole Pariſhes that have deſerved to be excommunicated, St. *Auſtin* doth not approve the Excommunication of a community, a multitude, becauſe ſuch a ſentence will fail of obedience, it invites contempt, and rather ſteels and hardens, than ſcares and ſaddens Malefactors. *Aquinas* ſeconds St. *Auſtin* with this reaſon, leſt the pure ear be rooted up with the tare.

Superſedendum eſt Excommunicatione quando tota plebs eodem laborat morbo. Auguſt.

Nunquam tota communitas excommunicari debet, ne cum loliis & zizaniis ſimul eradicetur & triticum. Aquin. in ſuppl. 3. part. Qu. 224 Act. 5.

The Canon Law fortifies the ſame caution, leſt the innocent be exterminated out of the Church, together with the delinquent. When in a Community all are engaged in the act of wickedneſs, yet not all alike in the guilt; ſome primarily intereſted, others ſecondarily: ſome with delight, others with regret. However a vitious multitude profeſſing Chriſtianity, if uncenſured, is not Unchurch'd.

The

The LETTER.

There are ſcandalous perſons in Corinth, *yet a Church. What they were in the firſt conſtitution appears*, 1 Cor. 1. *Where the Apoſtle brings them back to the conſideration of, as if he ſhould have ſaid: Is it not a ſhame you ſhould be thus and thus now, conſider what you were, and upon what account you were received at firſt.*

2. *Its true, there were wicked men among them, but they were enjoyn'd by the Apoſtle to caſt out thoſe wicked men, and if they did not do it, it was their ſin, and they were defiled by it, ſo that they remained ſuch a Church ſtill as might excommunicate their corrupt Members.*

The ANSWER.

You ſtart an Objection, and quickly ſtartle from it, as willing to be rid of it; it is propounded to its own diſadvantage, contracted and diſfigured: like one who contrives the diſeſteem of a choice piece of Tapeſtry, by diſcovering

covering the wrong ſide, and that not folded but rufled. You could have diſplayed it in a fuller meaſure, for proportion, in a brighter luſtre for view.

The whole Church of *Corinth* was diſcompos'd (in its Members corrupted) for Doctrine, Diſcipline, Practice.

1 *Cor.*15.35. 1 *Cor.*5.1. The Reſurrection, a Principle, a Fundamental of Religion contradicted, ſcoffed.

1 *Cor.*1.12. 1 *Cor.*3.3. A heinous prodigious inceſt not only not cenſured, but not mourned for.

1 *Cor.*11.18. Carnal ſtains of Animoſities, Parties, Sects.

1 *Cor.*6.6,7, 8. Contentions, injurious Suits, ſcandalouſly proſecuted before Pagan Tribunals.

1 *Cor.*6.12,15, 16. Intimation of Chriſtian Liberty abuſed, Chaſtity violated.

1 *Cor.*8.12. The wounding of Conſciences. Spiritual Murther, baning of ſouls.

1 *Cor.*10.20, 21,22. Idolatrous Pollutions.

1 *Cor.*11.13, 14,15. The Decency of Eccleſiaſtical Ceremies ſlurred.

1 *Cor.*11.17. The Piety of Eccleſiaſtical Aſſemblies blemiſh'd.

Diſorderly

Diſorderly riot, and diſtemper recorded. 1 *Cor.* 11. 20.

The Sacrament of the Lords Supper prophaned, and the diffuſive guilt evidenced by a diffuſive Judgement. 1 *Cor.* 11. 29, 30.

Ohè laſſatum juvate poſteri! The Church of *Corinth* was an *Augean* ſtable to be purged.

Can any Separatiſt point out the Church of *England* with a more uncomely feature.

Indeed the Church of *England* doth not diſcover more ſcandal, than that of *Corinth*, but you expreſs leſs Charity than the Apoſtle. He entitled the Church of *Corinth* thus depraved, the Church of God. To this Objection you frame a double reſolution. Firſt, as if the Apoſtle had reflected on their firſt conſtitution paſt, not their preſent condition and qualification.

This is (as *Bembus* blaſphemed) to make Scripture a noſe of Wax.

You confidently boult out an unwarranted, uncountenanced gloſs; unwarranted, becauſe it checks with the literal Grammatical expreſſion.

It

It is to the Church of God in τῇ ὄσῃ, a Participle of the preſent Tenſe, nor is there the leaſt plauſible plea for a tropical evaſion to flee to an *Enallage temporis*.

Since the holy Ghoſt vouchſafes the ſame title to the *Corinthians* of *Corinth*, in the 2 *Ep. v.* 1. of *Galatia*, *Gal.* 1. 2. of *Epheſus*, *Rev.* 2. 1. of *Pergamus*, *Rev.* 2. 12. of *Thyatyra*. *Rev.* 2. 18. of *Sardis*, *Rev.* 3. 1. of *Laodicea*, *Rev.* 3. 14. And yet all ſoyl'd with ſcandals.

Do not your ſelf vindicate an Authority of Excommunication at *Corinth*, when this Epiſtle was written? Where there was a true power of Excommunication, you muſt grant a true Church. The conſequence is infallible. Though there may in ſome Caſes, which I have already manifeſted be a true Church, where there is not the Exerciſe of Excommunication (the terms being not reciprocal) yet whereſoever there is a lawful exerciſe of excommunication, or a lawful right for that Exerciſe (though diverted) there is true Church.

As your Expoſition is unwarranted, ſo uncountenanced by Primitive, by Reformed,

Reformed, or even Romiſh Commentators.

Produce but one of any repute, and your ſtrained gloſs ſhall paſs more ſmooth and ſolemn. In the mean time I ſhall ſubſcribe to the univerſal Comment. All deceive none, none deceive all (ſaith *Pliny.*)

Omnes fallunt neminem, nemo omnes, Plin.

The Fathers generally flouriſh out the deſcription of the preſent condition of the Chriſtians at *Corinth* (the Church of God) as a perſwaſive ſpell to conjure their Unity, not to be divided, and their Piety not to be defiled, depraved.

Hunc titulum Corinthiis reliquit quod ſciliicet ſic Dei Eccleſia cum tot erroribus laboraret, &c. Facit id contra eos qui puram quærunt Eccleſiam in terris, quam cum non reperiunt, omnibus cætibus ſolent nomen Eccleſiæ adimere & alios damnent. Non tam rigidus cenſor eſt Apoſt. apud Corinthios. Aret. in 1 *Cor.* 1.

Reformed Expoſitors raiſe as a natural genuine obſervation on this title, a reproof of your Church ſeparation.

Your ſecond Anſwer cloſeth with the former. For if they muſt caſt out,

Sed mirum Paulum agnoſcere Eccleſiam Dei (ſanctificatos) quos paulo poſt ut ſchiſmaticos carnales reprehendit; ſic vero teſtatum facit ubicunq; nomen Chriſti invocatur, ibi Eccleſiam Dei agnoſcendum eſſe charitatis judicio quantumvis nævis & morbis cætus ille laboret. Par. in 1 *Cor.* 1.

Eccleſia Dei quæ magnis vitiis laborat, modo admonentibus pareat. Jun. & Trem.

Though among many faults, worthy reprehenſion, yet the Apoſtle doth acknowledge them to be a Church, *Diodat. in* 1 *Cor.* 1.

then they muſt be a Church, and the ſcandalous then of the Church (till ejection, excommunication) for elſe they could not be caſt out.

As for the excommunicating of their corrupt Members, the Hiſtorical evidence is very ſcanty; the ſole inſtance is the inceſtuous perſon: wherein the judgement was determined, the ſentence pronounced by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 5.3. but recommended to the Church of *Corinth*, to be atteſted, to be effectually executed.

Some eminent Divines, both anciently and lately have conjectured, That at the writing of this firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, the Apoſtle St. *Paul* had not fully eſtabliſh'd the Eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction in the Church of *Corinth*, but retain'd the reins of Government in his own hands.

However, I ſhall not obtrude that opinion, not queſtion the Commiſſion of the Church of *Corinth* for excommunication: nor can you juſtly the Juriſdiction of the Church of *England*, which I have amply cleared from adminiſtring any cauſe of juſt deſertion upon this account, though there may

may be vented an unjuſt imputation.

Whether the Church of *Corinth* might excommunicate its own corrupt members, is not controverted betwixt us. But whether (theſe being not excommunicated) the ſound part was bound to ſeparate locally from the unſound in religious Exerciſe. Let it be proved that this was effected at *Corinth*.

—*Et eris mihi magnus Apollo.*

The LETTER.

Object. *Can there be a perfect Church on Earth, it is compared to the Tares and Wheat, a draw net, a barn floor.*

Anſw. *Grant it be the Church meant there, which is to be proved, for the preaching of the Goſpel is called the Kingdom of Heaven, but how came in the Tares, not by Gods allowance, but by the Devil, and by the careleſneſs, and negligence of the keepers of the Field,* Matth. 13. 39.

2. *They are Tares, that is ſomething*

as moſt Expoſitors have it, as I have been acquainted with, very like to Wheat, that they could hardly be diſcerned from the Wheat, without endangering it, and ſo far cloſe cunning hypocrites may be left alone: but that there ſhould be no way left to caſt out thoſe that are venomous weeds, which do hurt and miſchief, I deny. I would anſwer particularly to each of theſe, but I ſhall ſay only this, if Chriſt ſhould allow of the wicked to be taken into his Church, he would contradict himſelf, as hath been proved.

But Chriſt doth not contradict himſelf, ergo.

The ANSWER.

The double Anſwer to this Parabolical Objection is like *Mephiboſheth*, Ἀμφιγύιος, halting with both feet.

Firſt, you mince it as an unneceſſary conceſſion, that it is to be proved by me, and aſſay'd to be diſproved by your ſelf. In other paſſages, in other parables, recited in this Chapter the Kingdom of Heaven is the Church, why

why not in this? This is the ordinary gloſs, this is the Expoſition of the Primitive Fathers, (the Donatiſts excepted) But you offer rationally to evince the contrary. The Church is not the Kingdom of Heaven, becauſe the preaching of the Goſpel is. This Exception is *ignoratio Elenchi.* Both may be ſo titled in different conſiderations. The Church on Earth is the Kingdom of Heaven initiate, and the Kingdom of Heaven is the Church conſummate; the preaching of the Goſpel is the efficient inſtrumental cauſe for propagating the Church on Earth, for promoting to the Kingdom of Heaven, and may Metonymically be ſo named.

Regnum celorum (i.) ſtatus Eccleſiæ militantis, Gl. Ord. in Matth. 13. 24.

After this Objection you Queſtion (But how came in the Tares?) it concerns not our Controverſie to ſift the Original, for the admittance of the Tares, but the peril of their continuance: Or whether a Field, becauſe it hath good Ears, ought to be quitted, becauſe it hath Tares intermingled? I ſhall diſmiſs this curioſity, touching the Original of the Tares, as St. *Auſtin* did an enquiry touching Original

ſin, with the pert reply of one plunged in a deep pit, who being demanded by a paſſenger the occaſion of that diſaſter: He replyed, Be ſollicitous how I may be reſcued out of this pit, not how I came to be ingulfed in it.

Cogita, quomodo hinc me liberes, non quomodo huc recideres quæras, Auguſt. Ep. 29. ad Hier.

The ſecond part of your Anſwer obſerves the likeneſs of Tares to Wheat, ſcarce to be diſcerned. 'Tis true, in the blade, but not in the ear. The Text doth manifeſtly aſſert their manifeſtation. (*But when the blade was ſprung up, and brought forth fruit, then the tares appeared alſo.*) They were not permitted to be ſevered before Harveſt, not becauſe they were obſcur'd, not ſufficiently diſcover'd; but leſt the pure grain ſhould be hazarded to be rooted up, being ſo intermingled with the Tares. When this miſchief of a promiſcuous extirpation may be prevented, Tares ought not to be ſuffer'd, (I confeſs) but Tares do often improve to be ſo numerous and vigorous in ſuch ſtrength and multitude, that they prevail above the Wheat, in this caſe both muſt be reſerved till Harveſt to be ſeparated.

Matth. 13. 26.

Should

Should the Church of *England* addreſs it ſelf by Eccleſiaſtical ſeverity, to root out the Quakers, Ranters, Anabaptiſts, *&c.* whom you will allow to be Tares, it were a fruitleſs attempt, a phrenſie of piety.

There being ſo populous an increaſe, they muſt be ſuffered to grow together till the Harveſt.

This demonſtrates, That the Church Militant is not exempted, acquitted from Tares, and that the Wheat grows with them in the ſame Field.

I ſhall not examine for the literal ſenſe, whether theſe Tares are to be underſtood Thorns (as *Aretius* imagines) or ſpreading Plants (as *Diodati* fancies) peculiar to the ſoyl of *Paleſtine*, noxious to Corn; whether parched Corn on the ſame ſtalk, with the pureſt grain, or a diſtinct cockle, a kind of darnel or eaver.

—*Cynthius aurem vellit.*

It is *Iſidore Peloſiots* caution, not to take πάντα καὶ πάντα, not ſcan ſyllables and circumſtances in Parables;

wherein only the ſcope is properly argumentative.

The three Parables couch'd up in your Objection, are like different lines that meet in one and the ſame Center, the ſame drift or deſign to diſcover the mixt condition of the Church Militant, of various colours like a Rain-bow: The ſeaſon of ſeparation of condemnation, being the day of Judgement, which as the Italian ſpeaks of the day of death, (*leva tutte le maſchere*) takes of all Masks. St. *Cyprian* hence infers, becauſe we diſcern Tares in the Church, we muſt not therefore depart from the Church.

Quia zizania cernimus in Eccleſia non ideo recedendum eſt ab Eccleſia, Cypr. l. 3. Ep. 3. ad Max.

It is the obſervation of *Junius* and *Tremelius* tranſlated exactly in our Engliſh Marginal Annotation. (The Church ſhall never be free from offences, both in Doctrine and Manners, till the day appointed for the reſtoring of all things do come; and therefore the faithful have to arm themſelves with patience and conſtancy. This inſtructs an humble, holy, toleration, not a ſtern, haughty ſeparation.

Chriſtus docet nunquam penitus liberam fore Eccleſiam ab offendiculis tum in doctrina & moribus, &c. Jun. & Trem. in Matth. 13.

In the conflict betwixt the Reformed and the Romiſh, when the Romiſh Diſputants

Diſputants object theſe three Parables to confirm that Reprobates are Members of the Catholick Church; our Reformed Champions do unanimouſly reply, That theſe Parables are Hieroglyphicks, Repreſentatievs of a particular viſible Church, not to be ſtretch'd, and applied to the Catholick and inviſible. If you queſtion the truth of my recital of this reſponſal, I will produce for your ſatisfaction a full particular Catalogue.

Inſtance at preſent only in *Whitakers* determination touching theſe three Parables. We do not deny in the floor, that is in every viſible Church, there is Chaff mixt with the Wheat; but notwithſtanding, we aver with St. *Auſtin* in the 48. Epiſtle, the Church to be preſerved in the Lords Grain, not in the Chaff, but with the Chaff, that the Church groweth among the Tares, yet is not a Field of Tares.

Nos non negamus in area, id eſt, in Eccleſia quaqua viſibili, eſſe paleam cum tritico miſtam. Sed cum Aug. tamen dicimus, in Ep. 48. Eccleſiam in fruntis dominicis conſervatum eſſe non in pa-

leis; & Eccleſiam creſcere inter zizania, ſed non eſſe agrum zizaniorum. Whitak. in prælect. Contr. 7. qu. 1. c. 7. de Eccleſia.

In the renowned diſpute at *Carthage*, betwixt the Catholick Biſhops, and

and the Donatiſt Biſhops, aſſembled by the Edict of the Emperour (our Controverſie being then in ſolemn agitation) The Parable of the Net collecting the good and bad Fiſh being preſſed by the Catholick Biſhops, the Donatiſts were pinch'd ſo far, as to confeſs good and wicked perſons to be in the Church, but the wicked only covertly, as in a Net in the Sea, whilſt the good Fiſh are not diſtinguiſh'd from the bad: But the Catholick Biſhops reinforc'd their Parabolical Argument. The Church is not only compared to a Net, but alſo to a Floor, wherein the Chaff is more apparent than the Corn. The Donatiſts, though convinced, yet were not ſilenced, but clamor'd. This were to conſtitute two Churches, one on Earth mingled with ſacred and prophane: the other in Heaven ſevered, ſanctified, refined from dregs and mixtures.

The Catholick Biſhops vindicated the Church to be one and the ſame, but not in one and the ſame ſtate Militant and Triumphant. The Church may in ſome conſiderations be expreſſed mortal, becauſe conſiſting of mortal mem-

members on Earth, but immortal in Heaven: As Chriſt himſelf was mortal before his Paſſion, but immortal after his Reſurrection. Hereupon the Donatiſts reviled rather than argued, and triumph'd (or rather vapor'd) when themſelves were conquered; as if a ſtrange Paradox had been vented in aſſerting the Church is mortal. The Catholick Biſhops candidly reply: Times ought to be diſtinguiſh'd. The Church in its preſent condition admits corruptible Saints, in its future incorruptible; when a mortal dreſs ſhall be exchanged for a robe of immortality. The Judge (or Mediator) herewith ſatisfied, ſet a period to the debate in that particular, and in the final cloſe of that grand diſputation, the ſaid day he pronounced, that the Donatiſts were manifeſtly confuted by the Catholick Biſhops.

Confutatos à Catholicis Donatiſtas omnium documentorum manifeſtatione pronuncians, Aug. in op. Brev. Collat. cum Donat. in fine 3. diei coll.

But you are ſtill unſatisfied, that though Tares be permitted (as undiſcerned, covert Hyppocrites) yet that no way be left that pernicious weeds ſhould be ejected. I grant they may be rooted out by excommunication, but I deny a ſeparation without it.

it. The wholeſome Herbs and fragrant Flowers in the Garden are not to be neglected, abandon'd, becauſe ſome peſtilent weeds are not rooted up. Beware leſt your ſeparating be the weeding of our Garden.

If you wave Humility and Charity, your ſelected Flowers are but perfumed Thiſtles; like the *Ibides* in *Alexandria*, which exclude one ſtench, but create another.

Laſtly, you Syllogiſe.

If Chriſt ſhould allow of wicked men to be taken into his Church, and to be continued in, he would contradict himſelf, as hath been proved.

But Chriſt doth not contradict himſelf. Therefore,

Not to except againſt the illogical compoſure of your Syllogiſm in an Hypothetical form, which being reduced to Categorical (the Logical exacteſt) its want of genuine artifice will be evident. But not to ſift punctilioes of Art, of Mood, and Figure. I anſwer, your major propoſition is a falſe ſuppoſition, you obtrude a tenet which we own not, That God allows the taking and continuing of wicked men into

into his Church. I pray diſtinguiſh betwixt permiſſion and approbation; and for the admittance and continuance of the wicked, betwixt the viſible and inviſible Church: This permitting in the viſible Church is not the acquitting of the men, but the protracting of the doom.

If your Major be underſtood of the approbation of wicked men in the inviſible (the Catholick Church) it is an impertinence, we diſclaim any ſuch aſſertion.

If your Major be meant of the toleration of wicked men in a particular, in a viſible Church, it is an inconſequence: Chriſt doth not herein contradict himſelf. So that the force of your ſmart proof is but the flouriſh of Sophiſtry. 'Tis *fallacia conſequentis.*

The LETTER.

Object. *Let a man examine himſelf, and look to himſelf.* Anſw. *'Tis true, for his own particular benefit, he muſt look to himſelf eſpecially, but I am ſo far bound to look to him, as to keep my ſelf clean, if any thing offends me, I am bound*

bound to go to him, and deal with him according to the Rule of Christ; if he be wicked, I am bound to see him purged from the Congregation, 1 Cor. 5. 6, 12. *I am not to suffer sin to lye on my brother, much less on my self,* Levit. 18. 17. *It was the speech of* Cain, Am I my brothers keeper?

The ANSWER.

Though the Argument you slightly propose hath not efficacy enough to demonstrate, yet it wants not probability to perswade, unless interest or prejudice suggest that of the Comedian.

Aristoph. ὃν πείσῃς ἐὰν ᾖ πείσῃς.

Primum discé, probationem nostri non alterius requiri. Aret. in 1 *Cor.* 11.28.

The concurrence of Texts and Circumstances renders the Apostolical Precept (*Let a man examine himself*, 1 Cor. 11. 28.) more pregnant and important.

The subject of the latter part of this Chapter, from the seventh to the end, is the reprehension of the prophanation of the Lords Supper, a reproof of Sacra-

mental abuſes at *Corinth*) wherein, notwithſtanding ſpreading notorious corruptions, yet the Apoſtle preſcribes only a ſelf examination, without reflection upon others: This emphatical reſtriction of the object (himſelf) is repeated, reinforced, not only in point of ſcrutiny, of ſearch; but in regard of penalty, of peril in *verſ.* 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf,* and in *verſ.* 30. *If we judge our ſelves.* 'Tis our ſelves excluſively of others. (Otherwiſe it were a ſpice of arrogance, not repentance.) From the limitation himſelf thus varied *Calvin* raiſeth a double obſervation. 1. To eat the Lords bread unworthily, is not to communicate with the unworthy, but without due preparation of ones ſelf, without diſcuſſion of ones own faith and repentance. 2. When we intend to be Communicants, let us not take our riſe abroad to ſift others, but

In quibus verbis duo ſunt obſervanda: primum indigne panem domini edere non eſſe cum iis qui indigni ſunt communicare, ſed non rite præparare ſeipſum, nec expendere fidem propriam & pœnitentiam.

Alterum cum cœna recipienda eſt, ne initium facimus ab aliis quo examinemus ipſos, ſed noſmet ipſos probemus, & certe ſi accurate conſiderentur omnia, qui ita otia abundant, ut inquirant in alios, ſæpius in re ſua ſunt negligentes & oblivioſi. Calv.

Curioſi ad cognoſcendam vitam alienam, deſidioſi ad corrigendam ſuam. Aug. in Cont. l. 10. c. 3.

our

our ſelves. Certainly (ſaith the ſame Author) if all things be exactly conſidered, they who have ſo much vacancy to be inquiſitive after others, are frequently negligent, and forgetful as to themſelves, their own lapſes, the ſharpneſs of their intellectuals and memories, being exerciſed at diſtance, out of their own Sphere.

You anſwer, 1. You are bound to look to another, to keep your ſelf clean, that is by not partaking of his uncleanneſs, by act, or by conſent, direct, or indirect. 2. You are bound to deal with him, if he offend, according to the Rule of Chriſt.

I have already copiouſly diſcuſs'd that Rule, and cleared it from your miſapprehenſion. 3. If he be wicked, I am bound to ſee him purged from the Congregation, 1 *Cor.* 5.6,12.

This objection hath been formerly debated, and ſatisfied. 4. I am not bound to ſuffer ſin to lye on my Brother, much leſs on my ſelf. That ſin may not lye on your ſelf, you ought to prevent the Commiſſion, if not thus to be a *Prometheus*, yet to be an *Epimetheus* by contrition and reformation.

That

That ſin may not lye on your Brother (as you expreſs it) you ought at fit opportunities to reprove, and to pray that your reproof may be effectual; if it be ineffectual, you ought to mourn, not to depart.

God vouchſafed an Aſterisk, a mark to be ſet upon the foreheads of them that mourn, and are ſorry for all the abominations that be done in *Jeruſalem*; yet thoſe holy mourners ſeparated not from the perſons of thoſe that acted the abominations. The Teſtimony you cite, *Levit.* 18.17. (*Thou ſhalt not diſcover ſhame*, &c.) relates to Nuptial, not to Sacramental Union or Separation; it concerns affinity in Marriage, but hath no affinity, no conſanguinity with our Controverſie. *Ezek.* 9.4.

You object *Cains* Language, *Am I my brothers keeper*, an anſwer more horrid than his Murther in *Gregory Nazianzens* Judgement, an aggravation of his crime by expoſtulation. To be a deſerter, is not to be a Brothers keeper, much leſs to be his accuſer.

'Tis Satans title and office, the accuſer of the Brethren. Schiſm is no ſpiritual guard, Separation no brotherly protection, unleſs like the Parthian Soldier, you will make your flight a defenſive fight, and will vindicate your Brother, whilſt you retreat, you ſeparate from him.

The LETTER.

Gods Miniſters are to put a difference, Jer.15.19. *It is their charge*, Matth.7.6. *They kill ſouls if they do it not*, Ezek.13.19,20. Jer.8.10.11. *They are like good Stewards to divide the word aright, and to give every man his portion*, 2 Tim. 2. 15. 1 Cor.4.1,2,3. *Gods Church is to look to it*, 1 Cor. 5.4,5. 2 Cor. 2. 6.

The ANSWER.

Gods Miniſters ought Doctrinally to decypher the Sheep and the Goats, not judicially to diſcriminate to ſever the

the Sheep from the Goats, this being the cenſure of the laſt day.

They claim a diſcretive Judgement in Religion as Chriſtians, a Directive as Miniſters (to borrow *Occhams* diſtinction) but not abſolutely a decretive Judgement, much leſs an executive to proceed diſorderly to execution (to ſeparate) before the Church hath proceeded to condemnation (to excommunicate) your Scripture Citations have been already examined (*Jer.* 15. 19. *Matth.* 7. 6.) You object, they kill ſouls, if they do it not, *Ezek.* 13. 19, 20. *And will you pollute me among my people for handfuls of barly, and for pieces of bread, to ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not die, in lying to my people that hear your lies? Wherefore, thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold I will have to do with your pillow, wherewith you hurt the ſouls to make them to fly.)* This is entirely, Ἀπροσδιόνυσον, an impertinency. This primarily concerns the Female predictions of Female Sorcerers, whoſe magical deceits were cheap Merchandiſe among the Jews. If by the wrench of compariſon, of

alluſion you make application of this to the Clergy of the Church of *England*; I ſhall anſwer only, that we may, and ought to refer it by appeal to the judgement of the grand Seſſion, and of the Univerſal Monarch, whoſe Ambaſſadors we are to determine, whoſe Propheſie is moſt ſordid and mercenary,

(*Hinc panis fumuſq; domi*---)

Yours or ours. I pray God be merciful to any who that day ſhall appear guilty, when our hearts ſhall be as viſible as our faces: when we ſhall not lift nor dare to Canonize our ſelves, nor Anathematize others.

Your next Teſtimony is *Jer.* 8. 10, 11. (*Every one from the leaſt even to the greateſt is given to covetouſneſs, and from the prophet to the prieſt, every one deals falſly. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people, with ſweet words, ſaying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.*) If you intend this Citation as a Proof, it is not pertinent to the Controverſie, if you intend

intend it as a charge, as an invective (given to covetouſneſs) I ſhall not retort it, and ſhape one calumny, an Apology for another (like the Scorpions inwards preſcribed, a phyſical cure againſt its ſting) but I ſhall pray, that you and we may purge both our hands, and our hearts from this guilt. That neither of us may ſacrifice our ſouls to our fortunes, nor ever repair a ſubſiſtence with the leaſt breach of conſcience.

As for the next impeachment of Levites that turn Paraſites (*ſaying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace*) we tax your own to applaud ſchiſm, whilſt you ſeparate from our Parochial Congregations; you indict us as acceſſories to prophanation, whilſt we do not ſeparate. I ſhall not diſmiſs this debated Problem, with the Rabbinical dilatory evaſion in ſuch diſputes, When *Elias* comes, he will reſolve us. In the mean time, we are countenanced by the uncontrolled practice of the Synagogue and Temple of the Jews, of all Chriſtian Churches in all ages, excepting ſuch

as have been univerſally reſented and recorded for Schiſmatical at leaſt, if not Heretical.

You argue, that Miniſters are like good Stewards to divide the word aright, and to give every man his portion. In this you bicker only with your own ſhadow. I ſhall not diſcuſs the confirmation by Text, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. 1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2, 3. Since I grant the whole aſſertion. It is their duty to divide the word aright, or to handle it, according to the Remiſts. (The Latin Fathers calling their Expoſitions, Tracts, as the Greek Tomes) To preach the Word aright (according to the Syriack.) To preach with life and voice (ſaith *Primaſius*) when the Converſation is a conſtant Sermon. Ὀρθοτομεῖν imports artificial exactneſs, and ſpiritual uprightneſs, like a Mathematician to draw a ſtreight line (which can be but one (ſaith *Euclid*) betwixt two points, but many oblique, bending) To chalk out the ſtreight way to Heaven, to cut out the direct path, or like a Cook to prepare, and temper, and proportion viands

viands to all ſorts of gueſts, or like a Steward to give every one his portion, to the wounded conſcience, a lenitive (conſolation) to the feſtred, ulcer'd ſoul, a corroſive (reprehenſion) But can you reſolve the Apoſtles Interrogatory, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things*? This requires ſingular ability, and integrity, the mixture of Endowments, Seraphims and Cherubims. Theſe Meditations ſhould excite ſorrow, and anguiſh, and aſtoniſhment, no Motives of Juſtification, of Separation. We may be faithful diſpenſers of Divine Myſteries, and yet not be deſerters of Chriſtian Aſſemblies for offences not convicted. 2 Cor. 12. 16.

I may apply that to my ſelf for the Sacramental Communion (which is eſpecially ſtarted at) what *Averroes* ſpoke of his Phyſick; That he never adminiſtred a Purgation, but his heart trembled ſome days before: And though I would neglect no Sacred Expedients to prepare and qualifie others, to promote the penitent, and to deterr the impenitent; yet after all aſſays, I apprehend my

ſelf the greateſt offender in the Congregation.

Being moſt acquainted with the corruptions of my own heart, being bound to be a ſevere Inquiſitor in my own boſom (not in other mens) my depraved condition being aggravated by my ſacred Function; which renders the indifferencies of others my infirmities, the frailties of others my crimes and prodigies (there being as large a Sacrifice preſcribed in the Moſaical Law, for the Prieſt, as for the whole Congregation) ſo dilated, multiplied is my guilt, chargeable with that ignorance I inform not, with that negligence I rouze not, with every offence I reprove not, with every errour I confute not (within my Domeſtical and Parochial bounds at leaſt) So that approaching to the Lords Table, with theſe ſearching perplexities, and agonies of ſpirit, I doom my ſelf more unworthy to adminiſter, that φοικτον μυσηριον, (as St. *Chryſoſtom* expreſſeth it) that dread myſtery, than any Chriſtian Communicant to receive it at my hands.

You

You conduct my Pen from the Miniſters to the Church, alledging *Gods church to look to it*, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. This objection hath already paſt the Anvil. Neither the active care nor cure of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline doth properly belong to the whole Church collectively, nor to the particular diſtinct Members ſeverally and individually, as to *ſubjectum adæquatum*. This Exerciſe of this power doth appertain to thoſe, that ſtear, that guide in the Pinnace of the Church, not to thoſe that tug and row: unleſs you will confound the Helm and the Ore. The ſubmiſſion enjoyned by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 13. 17. (*Obey them that have the over-ſight of you, and ſubmit your ſelves, for they watch for your ſouls*) is not to be confined to their ſpiritual Doctrines; but extended to their Eccleſiaſtical cenſure.

As to your objection. Grant your own expreſſion in your own interpretation (that the *Church is to look to it*) This warrants the Church to cenſure its Members, it doth not juſtifie the Mem-

Member to cenſure the Church, to ſeparate from it.

Laſtly, you add, 2 *Cor.* 2. 6. *It is ſufficient to the ſame man that he was rebuked by many.* 'Tis ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων, under, or in the preſence of many, which is a gloſs beſt reconcileable to the phraſe of the ſame Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. (*You being gathered together*) 'Tis by many, becauſe of the publick Solemnity atteſted by the whole Congregation. However you expound it, this confirms a juriſdiction in the Church, not a diſceſſion out of it.

The LETTER.

Much more I might ſay and enlarge on every particular going before, I purpoſed, and have cut ſome things ſhort, leſt I ſhould over-trouble you with my tedioufneſs, knowing you are able to judge by little, and hoping you will accept of all kindly, and in love, as it is offered. I confeſs I had but little time to recollect my thoughts for the compoſing of it, yet as

it

it is I preſent you with it, deſiring to hear and receive your judgement upon it, for which I ſhall not only be thankful, but ſhall promiſe to weigh it in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and endeavour to bend my conſcience to receive and embrace whatever is of Faith and bears the Scriptum eſt. *However I ſhall be perſwaded, I ſhall truly love you and remain,*

SIR,

March 12. 1654. Your Chriſtan Friend and Servant, in the Work of the LORD.

P. L.

The

The ANSWER.

That you are brief, ſuits with the grace and artifice of an Epiſtle, which if voluminous is monſtrous.

My over copious anſwer needs your ample candor to excuſe it. I would not be conciſe, becauſe I might not be too obſcure.

——*Dum brevis eſſe laboro*
Obſcurus fio——

Having aimed to unty each knot, not to cut it, not to evade but ſatisfie. If it appear ſo material, prove ſo effectual, as in the leaſt degree to procure the end deſigned, I ſhall account this reply compendious

emough

enough. This being *Pliny*'s plea for the prolixity of *Homer* and *Virgil*, ſetting out the Arms and Exploits of *Achilles* and *Æneas*. If in this my intention is fruſtrated; this is much too profuſe of ink and time. It wants brevity, if it wants efficacy. Yet in this caſe,

Vide quot verſibus Homerus, quot Virgilius arma, hic Æneæ, Achillis ille deſcribat, brevis tamen uterq; eſt, quia facit quod inſtituit, Plin. Ep. l. 5. ad Apollinarem.

Una litura ſat eſt.

Give me leave in the cloſe friendly and brotherly to adviſe, That you beware of new Tenets; they are like new Wines; they fume up to mens heads, make them light and giddy.

It is the Apoſtles grave charge, μὴ περιφέρεσθε. *Be not carryed about with divers and ſtrange doctrines.* *Heb.* 13.9.

Or

Or if you look back, do not dote on that part, that blemish of Antiquity, which the Church of Christ hath in all ages exploded for Heresie.

I pray examine well before you determine or censure, without some grains of holy compliance you will not edifie aright. It is an Italian Proverb (*Duro con duro non fa bon muro*) Rough stones will never make a firm structure, without a yielding material, without cement to close them. The Apostle dictates moderation towards all men. It is τὸ ἐπιεικὲς, lenity, gentleness in opposition to ἀκριβοδίκαιον, to exactness of rigor. *Phil.* 4. 4.

You may live to acknowledge my words Prophetical: When

When future years and various occurrences ſhall improve you ſpiritual prudence and experience (eſpecially if God ſhall vouchſafe a ſanctified calamity) you will confeſs the Unity, the Peace of the Church, to conduce more to the ſaving of ſouls, than the moſt ſpecious Sects varniſh'd with the moſt pious, glorious pretences.

You cannot be to cautelous in rending the Church of *England*. If you diſſect her bowels, ſift her Articles, her Conſtitutions; you may perhaps diſcover more Beauty of Purity, than you imagined (like *Neroes* acknowledgment) However caſt not dirt upon the Dugs that gave you Milk (the ſincere Milk of the Goſpel) Tear not the Womb of

Neſciebam mihi adeo pulchram fuiſſe matrem Xiphilin. in vita Neronis.

of your Chriſtian birth by Baptiſm.

Eph.4.3. Let me recommend to you the Apoſtolical charm, *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.* It is σπουδάζοντες. Haſtily endeavouring, leſt the wounds of a bleeding languiſhing Church become uncurable.

Gen.13.8. Let me cenſure you with *Abrahams* powerful Rhetorick. *Let there be no ſtrife between me and thee, for we are brethren.* The precedent words enforce, enliven the ſpell of this ſacred Eloquence. Moreover the Canaanites and Perezites dwelled at that time in the Land. *Then ſaid Abraham to Lot*, &c. There are men of Romiſh principles in the Land, lately titled Recuſants, but

but now I am to enquire how to name them: Consider whose hands you weaken, your Brethren? So you are to us as *Parmenianus* was to *Optatus*,

Non sint Collegæ, si noluit, tamen fratres sunt. Frater meus igitur Parmenianus, &c. *Optat. de Schism. Donat. l.* 1.

Recollect your self whom you fortifie, our common Romish Adversaries. The Eclipse of the Church of *England* is their splendor. They are united by our divisions, intrenched by our mutual Reproaches; our Scandals and Schisms objected, proclaimed by our selves, are their renowned, gloried Victories and Triumphs.

I hope in these Cautions, and all other passages, I shall have no cause to revive *Theodorus* complaint, that what is tendred with the right hand, is received with the left.

You have my judgement re-

quested, sincerely discovered without any wily, windy collusion; as weighing, I must pass an account on the dreadful day of Judgement, for every word hath past my Pen in this debate.

As to your promise of weighing this in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, I am not diffident of your performance, but I pray remember in *Phocylides* expression Σταθμὸν μὴ κρούειν, ἕτερον ζύγον ἀλλ' ἴσον ἕλκειν, let the Scales be held even, not bended with a singular prejudice. For in Scripture, as in a glass, our prejudicate Opinion discerns only its own complexion.

Like the indulgent phansie of that Athenian *Thrasilaus*, who walking on the Key of *Athens*, conceited that every ship

ſhip which arrived was his own.

As to your engagement of embracing whatever bears the *Scriptum eſt*; I ſhall only offer to your conſideration *St. Auſtin*'s Maxime. There is no Expoſition of ſacred Writ proceeded from the holy Ghoſt, unleſs it tend to Charity: And if you pleaſe to annex to this Canon the ſame Fathers pithy Ejaculations. That in peruſing and citing the Scriptures. Grant, O Lord, that I my ſelf be not deceived in them, that I deceive not others by them.

Ne fallar in iis, ne fallam ex iis. Aug.

Laſtly, I ſhall aſſure you of a reciprocal Love. Our Affections may be link'd, though our opinions are not. And though we are not both members of a ſeparated Church on each;

yet I hope (by the ſacred Merits of our bleſſed Redeemer) we ſhall be both in the ſame Congregated Church in Heaven: Where in a full Quire of Angels, all Notes ſhall be tuned to an exact Harmony, no jar of Faction, no Deſcant of Diviſion, but entire Uniſons: where our Anathemaes ſhall be exchanged to Anthems, our Cenſures to Allelujah.

Laughton *SIR,*

Decemb. the laſt, 1653. *Your truly affectionate Friend to ſerve you,*

William Thomas.

Non

Non ego tibi ſed cauſæ cauſa reſpondit. Et ſi culpa eſt reſpondiſſe quæſo ut patienter, audias, multo major eſt provocaſſe. Sed faceſſant iſtiuſmodi querimoniæ. Sic inter nos puræ germanitas, & deinceps non quæſtionum ſed charitatis nos ſcripta mittamus.

Hier. ep. 18. Aug. Aug. 27. Edit.

FINIS.